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# PUBLIC OPINION AS RELATED TO THE PROBLEM OF SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION IN SELECTED AREAS IN ILLINOIS

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# PUBLIC OPINION AS RELATED TO THE PROBLEM OF SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-ORGANIZATION IN SELECTED AREAS IN ILLINOIS

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## Section I

### Introduction

The democratic process thrives on the interplay and interaction of people's ideas. This is true whether the process operates on the international, national, state, or local level. This study is primarily concerned with the operation of public opinion on the local level as it is related to educational issues, more specifically, the issues associated with the reorganization of school districts in the state of Illinois.

Public opinion forms the bridge between the community and the school. However, it is not a stationary bridge; rather it is one that is subject to change. Public opinion can be informed, "re-educated," and molded by capable leadership. Generally speaking, school administrators have been at a great disadvantage in this respect because they have had few ways if any of obtaining dependable estimates of the opinions which are to be "re-educated." It certainly appears logical in public-relations work to make opinion-as-it-is the point of departure. This principle is fundamental to education of any kind. But such an approach is difficult if "opinion-as-it-is" cannot be determined or dependably assessed.

One of the recent and most significant problems which educators encountered in Illinois with regard to public-relations activities has been that of reorganizing school districts. The problem is especially important because any proposed change to become effective necessitates an expression of public support at the polls. That is to say, out of public opinion comes a collective judgment, a stamp of approval or disapproval, upon the recommended change of district organization.

In the first place, this thesis is concerned with the extent to which a dependable prediction can be made of the outcome of an election on a proposed school district. This study will report fairly dependable predictions which were made of the Clinton and Cerro Gordo school district elections by sampling voters' opinions on postal-card questionnaires. The second concern of this study is to investigate voters' opinions with respect to a number of issues which are related to school district reorganization. During the course of the prediction surveys several additional questions were asked which concerned such related issues. The purpose of this aspect of the study was to explore the possibility that respondents who expressed

*The writer is grateful for the guidance and counsel of his advisory committee in the College of Education at the University of Illinois, consisting of Professor F. G. Cornell, Associate Professor Merle R. Sumption, and its chairman Professor Harold C. Hand. Without the criticism and encouragement of these men this study would not have been completed. Special mention must be made of the helpful counsel given the writer by Professor Cornell on problems pertaining to sampling.

Acknowledgment is made also to the county superintendents of schools, county clerks, school superintendents and principals who provided assistance and sympathetic understanding during the course of this study.

different voting intentions also held different opinions about these related issues. In other words, did the voters who favored the establishment of a new, reorganized district also hold opinions on other related issues which were characteristic of that group? What opinions were characteristic of those who opposed reorganization proposals? An analysis of the responses obtained in the predictive studies indicated that major differences of opinion existed on three selected and related issues. This evidence warranted further investigation of this aspect of the problem. Therefore an intensive opinion study was conducted by interviewing a representative sample of voters in Champaign County on a number of questions concerning reorganization in this county. The responses were studied in their entirety and were broken down into various subgroups for further analysis.

Before reporting the basic facts of this study, it is desirable (1) to give the setting of the reorganization program in Illinois out of which this problem evolved, and (2) to consider briefly the more recent work which has been done in opinion study, particularly as related to school affairs.

## The Reorganization of School Districts in Illinois

The recent emphasis placed upon the reorganization of the school districts in Illinois is not without precedent. The necessity for such reorganization has been recognised for many years but actual progress has been slow. Since 1900 the Illinois Legislature has charged at least five state commissions with the solution of school reorganization problems. However, the findings of these commissions have resulted in few important changes in the basic school organization of the state.

What is the basis for this emphasis on reorganization? Why does the state school system need it? Briefly, these questions could be answered by a casual study of the unequal educational opportunities available to the children of the state, the unfair distribution of the tax burden which supports the educational program, and the uneconomical expenditure of revenue in many of the districts.

Education in Illinois, as in any other state, is facing a new era. The school is being challenged to assume its place as a great social service institution and to meet the needs of people living in this modern world. Youth is no longer content with the time-worn high school subjects. The curriculum is no longer thought of in terms of the three R's, but in terms of personal services, community development, and world understanding. This means the provision of vocational education, physical and mental health services, guidance services, technical training, social experiences, education for the handicapped, and education for out-of-school youth and adults. These and the many other services necessary for providing an adequate educational program require financial support over and above that which the average citizen is accustomed to thinking as sufficient.

What was the situation in Illinois in 1945 with respect to facing the new demands placed upon education? First of all, the educational structure was poor and in many instances unsound. The state was organized into many small districts and a comparatively small number of large districts. At that time there were over 10,000 school districts in the state, a number surpassed by no other state in the nation. Many of these districts had more school directors than pupils. The districts were of many types and varieties, all of which aimed basically at the education of youth. However, by their very nature they overlapped one another and created vast inequalities in educational opportunities for children of the state. Out of this multiplicity of districts, at least three fundamental weaknesses were cited by Sumption.[1]

"First, the vast majority of school districts are too small to provide a modern educational program. Latest figures indicate that more than 80 per cent of school districts in Illinois employed only one teacher. It is obvious that in these districts pupils are going to miss some of the things which we now consider essential in a well rounded education. We can't expect one teacher to offer music, art, handicraft, drawing, health service, guidance, special education and other things in addition to the regular subjects. Schools in these districts don't have modern libraries, audio-visual education, hot lunches, kindergartens, etc. They are just too small to support these features.

"One hundred pupils per elementary school is generally considered a minimum size for adequate instruction at reasonable cost. Only a very few of our elementary schools are that large.

"The situation among the high schools is no better. Almost two-thirds of the high schools in the state have enrollments of less than 150 pupils. Almost one-half have less than 100 pupils. Three hundred pupils is considered a minimum enrollment for a modern

1. Merle R. Sumption, "The Educational Situation in Illinois," unpublished radio address delivered over Station WILL, October 20, 1947.

high school. A high school district which is so small that it can provide only 100 or 150 pupils for its high school generally offers a pitifully inadequate program at a large per pupil cost. A staff of twenty teachers which is generally considered the minimum number necessary to offer a broad modern high school program is too costly for a 100 pupil high school. It would seem a teacher for every five pupils. This is obviously uneconomical when one teacher can easily take care of twenty-five pupils at little or no increase in cost. It is extremely costly to maintain a farm shop in the high school for a dozen boys but when there are fifty boys using the shop the per capita cost is not great.

"All the evidence points to the need for larger school districts which will supply more pupils per school which will in turn make it possible for these schools to operate efficiently and at a reasonable cost.

"The second fundamental weakness is the hodge-podge of districts whose basic pattern is that of dual structure. By dual structure is meant the practice of having separate school boards and school districts for the elementary school and the high school within a given community. Such an organization involves a duplication of effort in planning the school program, in housing, in transportation, and in purchasing of supplies and employing teachers.

"Separate tax levies must be made and separate school elections held. There is a tendency for pupils to drop out of school at the completion of the eighth grade since there is a break in the program there. Under the dual system there is seldom a common philosophy of education running through all twelve grades. It is difficult to utilize teachers to best advantage since a teacher employed by the high school alone does not teach in the elementary school close by no matter how badly his services are needed there.

"Authorities in school administration have repeatedly pointed out the undesirability of the dual system of schools. Education is a continuous developing process, and artificial breaks in the program are not conducive to best educational results. A sound educational program requires that the child be under the same administrative control from the kindergarten through the high school.

"A third basic weakness is the faulty financial structure of public education in the state.

"More than four-fifths of the money to support public schools comes from local property taxes. Less than a fifth comes from the state and federal government.

"Now some school districts are wealthy and have total valuations which run over $100,000 per pupil in the district; others have valuations of less than $4,000 per pupil. This means that there is 25 times as much local wealth back of some pupils as there is back of others.

"As could be expected tax rates are higher in poorer districts because they must tax heavily to obtain sufficient money from low valuations. On the other hand wealthy districts need levy only very low rates to get enough money to operate their schools. Poorer taxpayers pay higher rates. In the final analysis children are handicapped educationally simply because they happen to live in the poorer school district. Some districts are unable to provide an adequate school program even when staggering under an oppressive tax burden, while others escape all but the smallest share of the cost of education. The situation in the oil fields is a good example. There the local taxpayers for a short time may get a rest period from local taxes due to the enormous wealth of the oil properties. But because of the district system the local unit benefits almost exclusively; as a result these natural resources are drawn off without ever contributing significantly to the support of education in general. At the same time schools adjacent to oil-producing areas are often overtaxed to support the most meager school programs.

"The financial situation calls for a complete revision of our plan of supporting education. The amount of support furnished by the state and federal governments must be vastly increased. Certainly not more than one-half of school support should come from local taxes. At least one-half of the cost of education should come from the state. And this state and federal aid should be allotted in such a fashion that educational opportunities may be as nearly equal as possible all over the stage. The son of a Southern Illinois coal miner should have the right to as good a public education as the son of a Chicago banker. The children from rural areas should have as modern an educational program as those from the large cities.

"The cost of education must be equalized so that all the citizens of the state pay for the education of all the children of the state."

What was done about this situation.--The state legislature with the advice of educators sought to remedy the weaknesses in the state

educational structure by passing the County School Survey Act in 1945.[2] This act represented but one approach to the problem of reorganizing school districts. Other states, such as West Virginia, Utah and Kentucky brought about educational reorganization by state fiat. New York and Ohio represent the best known examples of reorganization brought about by establishing financial incentives. The most important provision in the Illinois legislation was that it established a sound democratic method for the solution of the problem by permitting a grass roots study of local school organization by the people themselves. This method was also used by other states, notably New York and Washington. The opportunity for local people to study school organization should go far toward securing a better public understanding of school problems.

Briefly, the Survey Act established permissive legislation for each county to set up a committee composed of board members and laymen to study the educational organization within each particular county. The committee, once established by vote of the county's school board members, had the following duties:[3]

"1. To study the school districts of the county and their organization for the purpose of recommending desirable reorganization which in the judgment of the committee will afford better educational opportunities for the pupils and inhabitants of the county, more efficient and economical administration of public schools and a more equitable distribution of public schools revenues;

2. To confer with school authorities and residents of the school districts of the county, hold public hearings, and furnish to school board members and to the public information concerning reorganization of school districts in the county; and

3. To make reports of its study and recommendations, including a map or maps showing existing boundaries of school districts and the boundaries of proposed or recommended school districts, concerning the reorganization and financing of the school districts of the county."

The preliminary report of each committee was due June 1, 1947, and the final report on January 1, 1948. An extension was later granted on each of these deadlines so that in effect the tentative report was due January 1, 1948, and the final report on June 1, 1948. During the six month interval of time between the completion of the tentative and final reports, a series of public hearings was required by law. These hearings provided the public with a an opportunity to express opinion on the proposals of the committee. This in essence provided every person in Illinois a chance to express himself concerning the tentative proposals. Experience showed later that not many persons availed themselves of this opportunity.

After the tentative report had been revised by the committee it was to be submitted to the State Advisory Commission for approval. Within a period of nine months following the acceptance of the final report, the county superintendent of schools was required to call an election in each of the proposed districts.

In order for a proposed district to be established it was necessary for the proposition to carry in a rural election and in an urban election. Urban is defined in the law as "any city, village or incorporated town having a population of 500 inhabitants or more." This procedure protected rural areas from being absorbed against their will by urban areas.[4]

Effect of the Survey Act.--Of the 102 counties in Illinois, 101 established survey committees. However, in operation the survey law did not achieve a great deal of success for two reasons.[5] First, most survey committees felt bound to propose only those reorganization plans which they believed would be immediately acceptable to the people since a defeat of their proposals would leave the school districts of the counties unchanged. In the second place, the legal machinery for dissolving the districts underlying proposed reorganized areas was so cumbersome and tedious that creation of sizeable new districts was difficult.

As a result the movement progressed slowly

2. House Bill No. 406 in the 64th General Assembly, State of Illinois.

3. Vernon L. Nickell, The School Code of Illinois (Springfield, Ill.: Office of Public Instruction, 1945), p. 350.

4. R. E. Woehner, "What Can We Learn from the Experience of Other States in Reorganization of School Districts?" Unpublished radio address, delivered over Station WILL, November 10, 1947.

5. M. R. Sumption, "School Board Members Give Leadership in Reorganization in Illinois," American School Board Journal (August 1948), p. 19.

and for two years the progress was almost at a standstill. In mid-summer of 1947 the state legislature enacted the Community Unit Law (House Bill 575) which was designed to simplify the process of establishing new districts. In essence this law implemented the County Survey Act of 1945.

The new law provided that upon petition of 100 voters residing within a proposed new district an election shall be held for the establishment of the district. In order for the district to be established the election must carry, separately, in both rural and urban areas. Urban, in this law, is defined as any village or city which is incorporated. The boundaries of the proposed district described in the petition are not limited by existing district or even county lines. In other words, a new district may include both total and partial former districts and territory in more than one county. The single limitation placed upon the establishment of a community district is that it must have a population of at least 2000 and an assessed valuation of not less than $6,000,000.

The effects of the new law were almost astounding. By June 24, 1948, a total of 133 new community unit districts had been established in Illinois including nearly a third of the area of the state.

A movement of this type, especially when it is based upon local initiative and support at the polls, involves a considerable amount of public relations work. It involves a constant molding of public opinion. It involves a continuous evaluation and assessment of public opinion. For if leadership does not know what people think how can it proceed intelligently to mold and to "re-educate" public opinion? How is it possible to determine the effectiveness of such an undertaking? Among which groups should leadership concentrate its efforts? These questions and others can only be answered when educators have at their disposal some means of assessing public opinion, some way of knowing what the public thinks. Such information would form the basis for an intelligent point of departure.

Attention is now directed to a brief consideration of what has been done more recently in the field of public opinion study as related to education.

## Recent Work in the Field of Public Opinion As Related to School Affairs

The study of public opinion in educational research has generally been limited to investigations concerning the attitude of board members, adminstrators, teachers and students. Not a great deal has been done in the field of appraising community opinion at large. Attention is directed to a selected number of investigations which have been conducted within the past decade.

Mort, Cornell, and Hinton have designed an instrument called "What Should Our Schools Do?"[6] for the purpose of determining what the public thinks should be the job of the school. The instrument is particularly concerned with what these men call the "adaptability principle," which stresses the necessity of a school system's ability (1) to throw off outworn procedures, (2) to shift emphasis in line with new and significant educational trends, and (3) to add new services.

In 1940, Rope[7] studied public opinion in Pittsburgh with respect to school support. The investigation used somewhat different methods than most of the other studies surveyed. In the first place, the interview approach was used rather than the more common pencil-and-paper questionnaire. Secondly, the group interviewed was a cross-section of Pittsburgh citizens. In other words, sampling techniques were applied.

In the same year, Seyfert[8] reported the results of an investigation, "What the Public Thinks of Its Schools." This study was conducted by the Cooperative Research Group in Secondary Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The opinions of adults in three New England communities were sampled by using the questionnaire technique and also, for some, the interview approach.

Professional polling organizations have on various occasions included questions pertaining to school affairs. The National Opinion Research Organization reported the results of "What is most Important in Education"[9] in 1944.

Somewhat similar to the Rope study already citied, was a study made by Blum[10] in Montreal, Canada in 1947. The purpose of this investigation was to determine what were the lay attitudes toward education in Montreal for

6. Paul R. Mort, F. G. Cornell, and N. H. Hinton, What Should Our Schools Do? (New York: Bureau of Publications, Columbia University, 1938), p. 316.

7. Frederick T. Rope, Opinion Conflict and School Support (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1941).

8. Warren C. Seyfert, "What the Public Thinks of Its Schools," School Review, XLVIII (1940), pp. 417-427.

the population as a whole, and to discover if there was a relationship between opinions and certain background factors such as sex, language, age, religion, social status, and education. Responses to selected questions were obtained by interviewing a cross-section of Montreal residents.

More recently, Hand has made an extensive study of "satisfaction-dissatisfaction" among pupils, teachers and patrons in the Decatur and Streator, Illinois, school systems.[11] This study investigated the extent to which these groups were satisfied with the present educational administration, policies, curriuclum, personal-social treatment, school activities, etc.

Attempting to determine to what extent the citizens of Springfield, Missouri, had progressive or conservative ideas about education, Cornell[12] conducted an opinion poll in 1948. This study made use of the interview approach and area block sample design. It was somewhat similar in content to a study made by Koopman[13] in Michigan which studied public opinion response to questions concerned with the democratic vs. autocratic role of the teacher in a school system.

Of unusual interest was a study of opinion polling methods reported by Jackson.[14] As a part of a study unit in elementary statistics the members of a class designed a sample of the student body of Pierce Junior High School in Grosse Point, Michigan. Rather effective results were obtained in predicting the outcome of the student government election in that school.

Two general statements at this point seem in order. Recent research in the field of public opinion as related to education underscores the importance of the public relations activities of the school. Secondly, although only a few investigators have relied upon sampling techniques to obtain responses to opinion studies concerning school issues, evidence supports the contention that the sampling procedure, relied upon so confidently by national opinion polling organizations, can be adapted and applied profitably to local opinion research concerning school problems.

### Prospectus

It has been pointed out how the problem under consideration has evolved from the reorganization movement in Illinois. Section II will report in detail the methods used and the results obtained in predicting the outcome of the Clinton and Cerro Gordo Community Unit District elections. Opinions expressed by the Clinton and Cerro Gordo school district respondents on three related reorganization issues are analyzed in Section III with the resulting conclusion that further investigation in the nature of a more intensive opinion study was warranted. Section IV explains the occasion for such a study in Champaign County, the procedures utilized and the analysis of the responses. Finally, a summary and conclusions are presented in Section V.

## Section II

### Predicting the Outcome of Elections on Proposals to Establish Reorganized School Districts

When improvement of the educational system is dependent upon the public's voice of approval at the polls, it is indeed important that educational leaders have some means of assessing the status of public opinion at strategic times. The educator who conducts a public-information campaign in behalf of some educational improvement is, generally speaking, more or less in the dark with respect to the effectiveness of his campaign. Some means of "gauging the status of public opinion" would reduce the amount of guesswork upon which he must necessarily depend. An assessment of opinion status relative to proposals for change can help leaders to know what is in the mind of the

9. The Public Looks at Education, Report No. 21, from Part II: "What Is Most Important in Education?" (Denver, Colorado: National Opinion Research Center, University of Denver, 1944).

10. William D. Blum, "Opinion Toward Education in Montreal, Canada," Journal of Experimental Education, XV (June 1947), pp. 219-267.

11. H. C. Hand, What People Think About Their Schools (New York: World Book Co., 1948).

12. F. G. Cornell, Springfield, Missouri, Survey (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois, 1948).

13. Margaret O. Koopman, The Implications for Teacher Education of the Autocratic and Democratic Role of Teachers. Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Ohio State University, 1945.

14. Humphrey C. Jackson, "POP Means Pierce's Pupil Opinion Poll," Clearing House (May 1948), pp. 537-539.

public.

Recently, one of the perplexing problems which has confronted educators in Illinois has been to know when to present reorganization proposals to the voters for approval. Obviously, the "pay-off" on any individual proposal for reorganizing school districts is the election. It is the voters' stamp of approval or disapproval on the recommended changes. Presumably, those people charged with the responsibility for reorganization recommend proposals which they hope will merit the approval of voters. However, the county superintendents, administrators, and survey committee members have very few ways,[15] if any, of knowing how the majority of voters feel about their reorganization proposals prior to the election.

The purpose of this section is to report the use of a technique for predicting the outcome of elections on reorganization proposals. This technique involves the use of mailed questionnaires and of sampling procedures. This section will report successful demonstrations of the technique in the Clinton Rural-Urban and in the Cerro Gordo Rural-Urban school district elections.

Obviously, any prediction of an election must consider the opinions of those people who are eligible to vote. A cumbersome and impractical approach to the problem would have been to consider the combined individual views of all the voters. The question was raised with respect to the possibility of using sampling techniques for the purposes of prediction. National pollsters have been accurate in predicting the outcome of national elections by using this device. Why couldn't sampling procedures be applied on a smaller scale to local elections?

For purposes of experimentation with and demonstration of a prediction technique involving sampling procedures, two communities in central Illinois, Clinton and Cerro Gordo, were selected. The areas chosen were conveniently located and were anticipating elections on new school district proposals at times which were suitable for purposes of this study. Certain people in both Clinton and Cerro Gordo had campaigned actively for the establishment of community unit school districts to be voted upon under the legal machinery of House Bill 575.[16] This meant that in each community the proposition for establishing a large unit district would have to be voted upon and carried in both rural and urban areas. In essence this necessitated two elections for each proposition --one rural and the other urban. Urban is defined in the law as any village or city which is incorporated. All voters residing in such areas voted in the urban precincts and all other voters in the rural precincts.

Therefore, a prediction of the outcome of the establishment of the Clinton Community Unit District necessitated the consideration of both the opinions of the rural voters and the opinions of the urban voters. Similarly, the Cerro Gordo prediction necessitated two predictions--one rural and the other urban. The opinions of eligible rural voters and of the eligible urban voters were sampled by mail postal-card questionnaires and the predictions were made from the returns thus obtained.

### The Clinton Prediction

Information concerning the election on a proposed Clinton school district in Dewitt County was received only a short time prior to the date set for the election. The time schedule that remained for doing all that had to be done for making a prediction was limited and necessitated the utmost economy in time and effort. The district which was proposed included a large per cent of the area in western and central Dewitt County. The focal point of the district was the city of Clinton, county seat of Dewitt County. The election date was set for December 20, 1947.

#### Procedure.

In order to make a prediction of the outcome of this election it was necessary to (1) determine the number of eligible rural voters residing within the boundaries of the proposed district, (2) determine the number of eligible urban voters living in the proposed district, (3) select a sample of rural voters to be polled by mail questionnaire, (4) select a sample of urban voters to be polled, and (5) obtain responses from both the rural and urban sample voters.

Determining the number of eligible voters.--Before selecting the rural and the urban samples, it was necessary to have available in some form information about all of the eligible voters in the proposed school district. The information needed included: (1) the names of voters, (2) the addresses of voters, and (3) the number of voters. The total number of eligible voters in the proposed Clinton Unit District was actually the number of people within that district who

15. Public hearings are required by law, but generally only a small minority of voters appeared and not all of those present voiced opinions.

16. See Section I

were qualified voters, that is, who were 21 years of age, who had resided one year in the state, ninety days in the county, and thirty days in the precinct. Technically a voter does not have to be registered to vote in a school district election.[17] However, it was impossible to secure a complete list of the names of all eligible voters (including both registered and unregistered). The most complete data available were the precinct lists of registered voters' names and addresses. These lists were secured from the county clerk's office in Clinton, the county seat of Dewitt County. For purposes of this study it was assumed that these lists represented the total number of voters.[18]

Precinct lists were secured for all areas which were included in whole or in part within the proposed school district boundaries. The precinct lists included the names of registered voters assigned to the various precinct polling places established by the county clerk for general election purposes. The precincts so established might include the area (1) within an entire township, (2) within an entire village, (3) within one of several township precincts, (4) within one of several village or city precincts, or (5) within a precinct which represents part or all of a village plus some of the adjacent rural area.

Revision of the precinct lists was necessary since few if any of them were up-to-date. The clerk's office and available supplemental lists which contained the needed information. The process of revising the precinct lists necessitated (1) crossing out the names of those voters who had died or who had moved out of the precinct, (2) recording changes of address of those voters who still reside within the precinct, and (3) adding the names and addresses of those voters who had recently moved into the precinct.

The revised precinct lists then contained the names and addresses of all eligible voters living in precincts which were wholly or in part within the proposed boundaries of the new Clinton district. The next job was to eliminate the names of those voters who resided in the parts of precincts not included in the proposed school district since they were ineligible to vote in the election. To do this it was necessary to determine exactly where the voters in such precincts lived. It was possible to determine whether or not a voter lived within the district by checking the number of the section [19] in which he resided. A detailed map was available which indicated the sections by number which were included within the new district. If a voter resided in a section the number of which was not included in the district his name was eliminated from the precinct list. After the names of all ineligible voters were eliminated, the precinct lists included the names of all eligible registered voters residing within the proposed district.

It was next necessary to segregate the lists into rural and urban groups according to the precinct arrangement which had been established by the county superintendent of schools for purposes of the special election on the proposed school district. This was necessary so that there would be available the number, names, and addresses of eligible rural voters and the same for eligible urban voters. For the most part, this involved only a sorting of the precinct lists to correspond with the precinct arrangement for the special election. On several of the urban lists appeared names with rural addresses. These names were of course included in the rural group of eligible voters. It was now possible to count the number of eligible voters in each rural precinct and in each urban precinct established for the special Clinton School District election. Table I presents these data.

Selecting the rural and Urban Samples.--Knowing the number of eligible rural and urban voters for the Clinton election it was then possible to consider the selection of the samples to be polled by mail. The question of

17. "The Registration Law applies to those Primary, General, or Special elections at which State or County officers are nominated or elected or at those General or Special elections at which Circuit Judges are to be elected. It does not apply to such elections as City, Village, Township, Park, School, etc.", from a statement prepared for the County Clerk of Champaign County by States Attorney John Breese, based on Illinois Revised Statutes, 1947, Chapter 46, Article 4-1.

18. In the polls conducted in this study it was assumed that the registered voters' lists represented the total number of voters. This assumption was warranted in view of the results obtained. During the course of this study three county clerks made statements to the effect that nearly all of the voters in their respective counties were registered.

19. This information was contained in the upper right hand corner of the voters' permanent registration cards which were maintained in looseleaf notebook style files in the clerk's office. Since the information on these permanent cards is not considered public, it was necessary to secure the cooperation of an authorized person. In a few cases two sections within a precinct had the same number. In such cases range numbers were used to determine in which section a given voter resided.

sample size [20] immediately entered into the picture. Inasmuch as the Clinton prediction was conducted first and was in a sense experimental, an arbitrary sample size of one hundred rural voters and one hundred urban voters was chosen. Since the sample would be stratified by voting precinct, the margin of error would be less than in a purely unrestricted random sample.[21] Proportionate representation was alloted to each of the five rural precincts established for the special election, and to each of the two urban precincts. Actually, however, the precinct established by the county superintendent of schools in the city of Clinton was also stratified in the course of drawing the sample by the eight general election precincts. In the process of drawing the sample names, the rural precinct lists were placed in one pile and the urban lists in a second pile. The sample ratio used for selecting the rural sample was 1/14.[22] For the urban sample it was 1/40. After a random starting point had been chosen from a table of random numbers for purposes of selecting the rural sample, every fourteenth name and address was drawn from the rural precinct lists.[23] The 91 names thus drawn composed the rural sample. After determining a random starting point for purposes of selecting the urban sample, every fortieth name was drawn from the urban precinct lists to be included in the urban sample of 108 names.

Attention is now directed to the method of obtaining the response from the rural and urban sample voters.

Obtaining the response.--It was mentioned earlier that voters' opinions were sampled by means of a postal-card questionnaire. The questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter and about five days after the first mail release a special delivery follow-up was mailed to those sample members who had not responded by that time. On the day preceding the election personal and telephone follow-up interviews were conducted.

1) The covering letter.--A letter, mimeographed on Bureau of Research and Service stationery, was mailed to each sample member along with the questionnaire, under date of November 21, 1947. The purpose of the letter was to invite the cooperation of the respondents in participating in this experimental study. As an added incentive to cooperative respondents were promised confidential prereleases of the results of the study. A reproduction of the letter is given on the next page.

It was discovered that readers were confused with the last sentence in the first paragrahp, reading "We are asking you to assist in finding what the opinions of voters are in your district." Some respondents understood this sentence as a request by the Bureau for them to go out in the field and obtain interviews. These respondents were properly informed by special letters or by telephone. A change of wording in the Cerro Gordo letter[24] remedied this defect.

2) The postal-card questionnaire.--Each sample respondent was mailed a postal-card questionnaire which contained on the front side the return address and a code number. The code number, placed in the lower left hand corner of the card in small figures, was used for purposes of readily identifying respondents.

On the reverse side of the card appeared the questions. The top half of the card contained the following:

"Dear Sir:

On the proposal to combine my school district with others to form a larger school district
(Check one answer)

_____I intend to vote for combining districts
_____I intend to vote against combining districts
_____I probably will vote but uncertain how
_____I do not intend to vote."

The purpose of this question was to get an expression from the sample respondents of their intentions of voting at the coming school election.

On the bottom half of the card three abbreviated questions were used. These questions asked for opinions on three important issues concerning reorganization. They were included in this experimental study in order to determine to what extent differences existed in opinion on the three issues among respondents

20. See Appendix A, thesis, Library, University of Illinois.

21. See Appendix B, thesis, Library, University of Illinois.

22. The ratio needed to obtain about 100 sample members from the number of eligible rural voters.

23. Technically, this is known as a systematic sample.

24. See page 405 in this section.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
College of Education
Urbana, Illinois

Bureau of Research November 21, 1947

Dear Citizen:

As you know, there will soon be an election in your community on the proposed Clinton Community Unit School District. We are asking you to assist in finding what the opinions of voters are in your district.

You have been chosen as a member of a scientifically selected panel of voters to take part in an opinion poll.

Will you please check the enclosed card and mail it as soon as you possibly can. The success of the survey will depend upon our receiving your reply.

You need not sign the card, as your answers do not bind you as a voter in any way, but it is important that you answer as carefully as you can.

Your community will be the first in the State of Illinois in which there will be a scientific polling of opinion on this subject. How close can the election results be predicted? The answer depends upon whether or not you cooperate with us in this study.

We will send you a confidential pre-release of results when they are ready. As one of our selected panel members, we shall be glad to hear from you if you care to know more about this study.

Yours very truly,

Francis G. Cornell
Director

FGC:av

Enclosure

who had dissimilar intentions on how they were going to vote. The three questions, discussed more fully in Section III are presented here.

"In my opinion, combining school districts would make possible:
(Check one answer for each)

a) Better schools
Yes___; No___; Uncertain___.
b) More economies in expenditure
Yes___; No___; Uncertain___.
c) A fairer distribution of the tax burden
Yes___; No___; Uncertain___.

3)The special delivery follow-up.--Five days after the first mail release, special delivery follow-ups were mailed to these respondents who had not returned their postal-card questionnaires. The follow-up included a copy of the original covering letter, another questionnaire card and a personal covering letter, typed, to each respondent. A copy of this letter follows; see next page.

The psychological effect of the follow-up letter was enhanced by use of a special delivery stamp. Evidence secured by personal contacts as well as the percentage of returns substantiates this conclusion. Typical comments made by respondents on follow-up interviews were: "I just mailed my card. I thought since it came special delivery that it was important;" or "I told my husband that this was important since it came special delivery but he didn't get around to sending it yet."

4) Follow-up interviews.--Because of a tight time schedule in the Clinton study, there was not sufficient time for all respondents to return their questionnaires prior to the election. In order to get maximum returns for this study, follow-up interviews were conducted on the day before the election. During the period from November 21 to December 10, usable mail replies were received from 55 of the 91 rural sample members and from 55 of the 108 urban sample members. Follow-up interviews by telephone and by personal contact brought the net usable response to 62 rural replies and 96 urban replies.

Results.

The rural and urban sample response.--It will be remembered that the original rural sample contained 91 voters and the urban sample 108 voters. At the time the samples were selected it was assumed that the information contained on the precinct lists was accurate and up-to-date. However, it was soon discovered that the printed lists contained errors, even after they had been revised with the most recent data which the county clerk could provide.[25] Of the 91 rural sample voters originally selected, 15 were ineligible to vote in the proposed school district election. Of these 15, 7 had moved out, 3 were unknown, 1 had died, and 4 did not actually reside within the proposed district. The last four cases can be accounted for in this manner. During the process of determining the number and names of eligible voters, it was noted that a small number of voters resided in sections which were split by the district boundaries. It was pointed out earlier that a voter's residence could be identified by section number. But there was no way of knowing, with the data available, in which part of a section a given rural voter resided. Hence it was impossible to know whether to retain or to eliminate the name of a voter residing in a section divided by the district boundary. In this instance, all voters residing in such sections had been considered eligible.

Of the 108 urban sample voters, 6 were ineligible to vote in the election. Of this number, 4 had moved away and 2 were unknown. The fact that both samples contained names of voters who were unknown indicates that the county clerk's precinct lists had contained inaccurate information for some time.

The presence of ineligible voters in the original samples necessitated an adjustment of sample size. By subtracting the number of ineligible rural sample voters from the original number in the rural sample (91-15) and by deducting the number of ineligible urban voters from the original number in the urban sample (108-6) the adjusted sample sized were obtained:

Rural Sample - 76 voters
Urban Sample -102 voters

From the 76 rural sample voters, 62 (82 per cent) usable replies were obtained. Responses from 96 of the 102 (94 per cent) urban sample voters were secured. Table II indicates what these sample voters said with respect to their intention of voting in the proposed Clinton School District Election.

It is evident from the data in Table II that

25. This can be explained as follows: The county clerk has to depend upon local precinct chairmen to provide his office with information concerning voters who have died, or moved away or who have moved into the precincts. Obviously the reports turned in by daily precinct chairmen were incomplete.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
College of Education
Urbana, Illinois

Bureau of Educational Research
Office of Director

January 5, 1948

Recently we mailed to you a letter and an enclosed card. Perhaps you did not receive it, or have mislaid it among the many things you have to do.

Since the success of our study depends upon receiving your answers to the questions on the card, we are sending another copy of the letter and another card.

Will you please cooperate with us in this study and mail your answers back as soon as you possibly can?

Very truly yours,

Francis G. Cornell
Director

FGC:av
Enclosure

sample voters in both rural and urban precincts were inclined to favor the establishment of the proposed district. The question can now be raised whether or not it is possible to make a dependable prediction of the outcome of the actual election from the data obtained.

Predicting the percentage of favorable votes to be cast at the polls.--Voters in each of the two samples were grouped into four categories for consideration. Groupings were made in accord with the responses given as indicated in Table II. Every voter who responded could be classified as one who expressed an intention of (1) voting "For", (2) voting "Against," (3) probably voting but uncertain how, or (4) not voting at all.

For purposes of the prediction, the voters in category four were taken at their word and not considered further. Voters in categories one and two apparently left no doubt as to their intentions. However those in category three presented a special problem since they themselves did not know how they would vote if they did vote. With this limitation imposed and because no other alternative appeared more logical, it was assumed that if the voters in category three did vote, they would vote "For" and "Against" in the same proportion as did the voters in categories one and two. Therefore, from a purely mathematical point of view, it was necessary to consider only the voters in the "For" and "Against" categories to arrive at a percentage prediction, since the further consideration of the "Probables" would not alter the ratio of the percentages of "Fors" and "Againsts."

With a 94 per cent response from the urban sample it was assumed that the remaining 6 per cent (non-response) would not seriously affect the results of the poll. Therefore, the prediction for the urban election was made from the 53 respondents who had expressed an intention of voting either "For" or "Against." Of this number, 46 were in the "For" category. Hence a favorable percentage estimate of 86.8 (46 divided by 53) was obtained.

Since the response obtained from the rural sample voters was only 82 per cent and since the rural sample had been stratified according to voting precincts, it was possible to make use of a simple weighting system to determine the percentage of favorable responses. Treating the response in such a manner gave proportionate weight to the favorable response obtained from each precinct and eliminated some of the error due to non-response. The percentage of "For" votes from each stratum (or precinct) was multiplied by the sample quota (sample ratio, 1/14, times the number of eligible voters in each precinct) for each stratum. The resulting weighted strata responses from each of the five strata were totaled and divided by the number (92) obtained by summing the respective sample strata quotas. From this calculation (54.4 divided by 92) a weighted percentage estimate of favorable responses was obtained, namely, 59.1 per cent. Table III presents the data from which the estimate was made.

The results of the actual election.--Table IV presents data which indicate the number of voters who voted in the actual Clinton election and makes a comparison of the percentage estimates obtained from the two samples with the actual percentages secured from the election itself. The table is self-explanatory.

Table IV indicates that the percentage estimate for the rural election was 59.1 while in the actual election 70.5 per cent voted "For". The difference is 11.4 per cent. In the case of the urban election it will be noted that the difference is only 2.0 per cent. The urban percentage prediction was obviously quite dependable. One plausible explanation for the greater discrepancy in the rural prediction is the fact that the time schedule did not allow sufficient time for rural respondents to return the postal-card questionnaires. Mail service to and from the rural areas was found to be one to three days later than the mail service to and from the urban centers.

The question was immediately raised whether or not the results obtained in the Clinton study, particularly in the urban election, occurred only by chance. This led to a repeat demonstration of the technique in the Cerro Gordo election which was held about one month later and which would provide ample time for the return of mailed questionnaires.

But before reporting the results of the Cerro Gordo study, further analysis of the responses obtained in the Clinton study are in order.

The mail response only.--It has been pointed out that because of a tight time schedule in the Clinton study follow-up interviews were conducted on the day prior to the election so that the maximum number of responses might be obtained. These interviews were conducted chiefly in the urban areas. An interesting side-light to the Clinton prediction experiment was an analysis of only the mail responses. How close would the mail replies estimate the favorable percentage of votes cast? Table V presents a comparison of the percents of "For" votes cast in the election, obtained from the entire response and from only the mail response.

In this instance, the percentage estimates obtained from only the mail responses were

somewhat more accurate than were the percentages obtained from the entire response. This was true, as shown in Table V, in both the rural and urban elections.

The response obtained from the follow-up interviews.--The necessity for the follow-up interviews has already been explained. Of the 66 interviewees contacted, 23 said they had fully intended to return their postal-card questionnaires. Assuming that they would have done so, 43 respondents remained who said nothing about returning the cards. It was taken for granted therefore that they would not have done so.

Of this group, approximately 75 per cent said that they did not intend to vote or that they probably would vote. Over half of them indicated no intention of going to the polls. Only about one-fourth said that they intended to vote.

It appeared, then, that the sample respondents most interested in the issue and most likely to go to the polls were the respondents who participated in the study by returning the postal-card questionnaires. This fact may explain why a rather dependable prediction could be made from only the mail response in the Clinton Study.

Further evidence to support the above contention is based on the fact that only one person out of the combined 177 rural and urban sample voters appeared at the polls to vote who did not return a postal-card questionnaire. A later section explains where this information was obtained.

Predicting the total number of voters who would come to the polls.--It has been demonstrated that a rather dependable prediction can be made of the percentage of favorable votes to be cast in a school district election. The question may now be raised with respect to the possibility of predicting or estimating the total number of voters who will appear at the polls.

In the rural election 25.6 per cent of the eligible voters actually voted. Sample response indicated that 69.3 per cent intended to vote. In the urban election 7.5 per cent of the eligible voters actually appeared at the polls while 55.2 percent of the urban sample respondents indicated an intention of voting. Obviously the discrepancies were large. Could they have happened by chance or was there some other factor which kept the sample percentages from being nearer to the true percentages?

The standard error of the rural sample percentage, 69.3, in 5.86. Therefore 99 times out of 100 the true percentage would fall within 17.6 (5.86 times 3) per cent of the observed sample per cent. Obviously the actual per cent, 25.6, does not fall within this range.

In the case of the urban sample percentage, 56.2, the standard error is 5.08. Hence, the true percentage should fall within 15.2 per cent (5.08 times 3) of the observed sample per cent. Again the actual per cent, 7.5, does not fall within the range.

It is very likely, then, that factors other than chance were operating. Some light is thrown on this problem in the next section which discusses the confidence one can place in a respondent's statement that he intends to vote.

Confidence is respondents' commitments.--The question can well be raised at this point with respect to how much confidence can be placed in a respondent's statement that "he intends to vote either 'For' or 'Against'," or that "he probably will vote" or that "he does not intend to vote." Evidence to answer these questions was obtained by making a follow-up study of the Clinton Election. From this source it was possible to know how many and which of the sample respondents actually voted in the election. It was therefore possible to check the reliability of the respondents' statements. Table VI presents the results of this phase of the study.

Three observations from Table VI are called to the reader's attention. In the first place, if a rural respondent said he intended to vote or that he probably would vote, it was more likely for him to do so than it was in the case of an urban respondent giving similar commitments. Secondly, those respondents who said they "intended to vote", either for or against the proposition, were much more likely to go to the polls and vote then were respondents who said they "probably would vote but uncertain how." Of the former group, 35.4 per cent actually voted while only 11.4 per cent of the latter group did so. The third generalization evident from the table is that when a respondent said he "did not intend to vote", he actually meant what he said. Of the 27 sample members who responded thus, not one appeared at the polls. In the preceding section mention was made that this analysis would throw some light on the fact that the prediction of the number of voters who would come to the polls was inaccurate. It appears that the limited confidence which one can place on a respondent's expressed intent of going to the polls had some bearing on the problem. In the Clinton election only 35 per cent of the respondents who said they "intend to vote" actually appeared at the polls. The remaining 65 per cent said

they intended to vote, but didn't. Therefore a prediction of the percentage of voters who were going to appear at the polls was certain to be too large if based on respondents' expressed intentions of voting. It will be noted that the percentages obtained in the preceding section over-estimated how many voters would vote in the Clinton election.

The response to the three supplemental questions.--It has already been mentioned that three opinion questions relative to reorganization issues were included on the postal-card questionnaires. The response to these three questions is discussed in Section IV.

## The Cerro Gordo Prediction

As mentioned earlier, a repeat demonstration of the prediction technique was planned after its first trial in the Clinton election. An opportunity for making a second prediction was provided when notification was received that an election on a proposed Cerro Gordo Community Unit School District was scheduled for January 10, 1948. More time was available for making the study in Cerro Gordo than was available in the Clinton experiment. This was an advantage as the narrow time limits in the earlier demonstration imposed various limitations upon the work.

Cerro Gordo is a town located in the southwestern portion of Piatt County. The proposed district embraced the territory around this town and included considerable area in adjoining Macon County.

In some respects this prediction study was similar to the earlier experiment and in other respects it differed. This section will be concerned with reporting only the differences in procedure and with presenting the results obtained.

### Procedure.

Determining the number of eligible voters.--As in the earlier demonstration, it was necessary first to determine the number, the names and addresses of eligible rural and urban voters for the proposed Cerro Gordo District Election. For the two rural precincts (Flory and LaPlace) and for the only urban precinct (Cerro Gordo) in Piatt County the procedure was identically the same as that used in the Clinton Study. Printed precinct lists of registered voters' names and addresses were available from the county clerk's office in Monticello. These were revised, sorted and counted.

However, a different problem arose when it came to gathering this data for the two rural precincts (Oakley and Ridge) in Macon County. The clerk's office in Decatur did not have precinct lists available which contained the names and addresses of registered voters in Macon County. Up-to-date information about registered voters was maintained in a three by five card file. These cards were grouped according to the arrangement of precincts established by the clerk for all general elections. The card file was available for use in this study through the cooperation of the county clerk and his assistant. Essentially, the task of determining the number of eligible voters with the use of three by five card files was not much different than when printed precinct lists were used. The files were secured which contained the names of all voters residing in the general election precincts which were included in whole or in part within the proposed school district boundaries. The names of ineligible voters were eliminated and the count was made. Table VII presents the number of eligible voters in each of the four rural precincts and in the only urban precinct.

Selecting the rural and urban samples.--Since the precinct lists used in the Clinton study contained inaccurate and incomplete information, it was very likely that the information secured about registered voters from the clerks in Piatt and Macon Counties was also inaccurate and incomplete. It will be remembered that more ineligibles were discovered among Clinton rural voters than among the urban voters. Of the 92 rural sample members selected in the Clinton study, 16 were ineligible and of the 108 urban sample members 6 were ineligible. Therefore, the estimated size for the Cerro Gordo rural sample was increased to approximately 150. The estimated size for the urban sample was set at approximately 110.

The sample ratio used to obtain the preliminary sample number was 1/6 for both rural and urban samples. The rural sample was divided into four precinct strata each of which was proportionately represented. It was impossible to divide the urban sample into strata by precincts because only one precinct existed in Cerro Gordo.

After a random starting point was determined for purposes of selecting the rural sample, every sixth name and address was drawn from the precinct lists which contained the names of eligible rural voters residing in the two rural school election precincts in Piatt County.[26] This process was continued in Macon County by selecting the name and address on every

26. Technically, this is known as a systematic sample.

sixth card. The 150 names thus drawn composed the rural sample. After a random starting point was found for purposes of selecting the urban sample, every sixth name was drawn from the urban precinct lists to be included in the urban sample of 104 members.

Obtaining the response.--Responses from Cerro Gordo sample members were secured as in the Clinton study by means of a postal-card questionnaire accompanied by a covering letter and a special-delivery follow-up. The covering letter used was a revision of the Clinton covering letter. It has already been pointed out that some confusion resulted over the wording of the first paragraph of that letter. A reproduction of the revised letter used in the Cerro Gordo study is presented here.

No evidence was obtained which indicated that respondents misunderstood the purpose of this letter.

The postal-card questionnaire and the special delivery letter used in this study were essentially the same as those used in the earlier experiment at Clinton.

Since sufficient time was available for the return of the postal-card questionnaires in this study and because of the dependability of the results secured from only the mail response in the Clinton study, no interview follow-up work was planned or conducted in the Cerro Gordo demonstration.

Results.

The rural and urban sample response.--It will be remembered that the original rural sample contained 150 members and the urban sample 104 members. Experience in the Clinton study indicated that a number of the sample members selected would be ineligible to vote and hence did not belong in the sample. This was due to inaccuracy in the information secured from the county clerk's office.[27] Of the 150 rural sample voters originally selected for the Cerro Gordo study, 9 were ineligible leaving an adjusted sample size of 141 members. Of the 104 urban sample voters selected, 9 were ineligible leaving 95 members in the urban sample.

From the 141 rural sample members, 100 (71 per cent) usable replies were received. Responses from 63 of the 95 (66 per cent) urban sample voters were obtained. Table VIII indicates what these sample voters said with respect to their intention of voting in the proposed Cerro Gordo School District Election.

It is evident from the preceding table that rural and urban sample voters favored the establishment of the proposed district.

Predicting the percentage of favorable votes to be cast at the polls.--For purposes of making percentage estimates of favorable opinion toward the establishment of the Cerro Gordo district, the sample responses were treated in a manner similar to that accorded the responses in making the Clinton prediction. The rural sample response was treated so that proportionate weight could be given to the favorable response obtained from each precinct. Since the urban sample contained only one precinct, weighting was impossible. Table IX presents the data from which the weighted percentage of rural favorable responses was obtained.

By dividing the total number of weighted favorable rural responses by the total number in the sample quotas (108.9 divided by 153) a percentage estimate of 71.2 was obtained. The urban percentage estimate, calculated by dividing the number of favorable responses by the toal number of favorable and unfavorable responses (46 divided by 49),[28] was 93.9.

The results of the actual election.--Table X presents data which indicates the number of voters who actually voted in the Cerro Gordo election and makes a comparison of the percentage estimates obtained from the two samples with the actual percentages secured from the election itself.

Table X indicates that dependable percentage predictions were obtained for both the rural and urban elections. The percentage differences, 4.2 in the rural election and 2.7 in the urban election, are indeed negligible for all practical purposes.

The results of this demonstration would tend to indicate, then, that the techniques used for making the predictions of the Clinton and Cerro Gordo elections were reliable and not attributable to mere chance.

Predicting the total number of voters who would come to the polls.--It was shown in the Clinton study that and estimate of the total number of voters who would come to the polls could not be based strictly upon the obtained sample percentages. This was true because of those who said they intended to vote only 3.5 respondents out of 10 actually did so.

27. An explanation of this was presented earlier in this section.

28. See Table VIII.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
College of Education
Urbana, Illinois

Bureau of Research and Service December 30, 1947

Dear Citizen:

As you know, there will be an election in your community on January 10th on the proposed Cerro Gordo Community Unit School District.

We are trying to predict the outcome of this election in your community. To do this, it is necessary to conduct an opinion poll in your locality. You have been chosen as a member of a scientifically selected panel of voters to take part in this opinion poll.

Your community is one of the first in the State of Illinois in which a scientific poll of opinion on this subject is being conducted.

Will you please place four (4) check marks on the enclosed card and mail it as soon as you possibly can? The success of this survey will depend upon our receiving your reply.

You need not sign the card, as your answers do not bind you as a voter in any way. It is important, however, that you answer as carefully as you can.

How closely can the election results in your community be predicted? The answer depends upon whether or not you cooperate with us in this study. All you need to do is to check the enclosed card and mail it as soon as possible.

We will send you a confidential report of the results when they are ready. As one of our selected panel members, you may feel free to write for further information on this study if you care to do so.

Very truly yours,

Francis G. Cornell
Director

FGC:av

Enclosure

It was possible in the case of the Cerro Gordo study to get an estimate of how many would actually vote by using the evidence secured in the Clinton study.

In the Cerro Gordo rural sample response 72 respondents said that they intended to vote. But if, as in the Clinton rural election,[29] only 44.2 per cent actually did vote, this would mean that 31.8 sample respondents (72 times 44.2 per cent) would vote in the Cerro Gordo election. In the same rural sample response, 22 respondents said that they would probably vote. But if, as determined in Clinton, only 28.3 per cent actually did so, then it was fair to assume that only 7.2 rural sample respondents (22 times 28.3 per cent) would appear at the polls. By addition, then, it was possible to estimate that 39.0 rural respondents would vote (31.8 plus 7.2) at the polls in the Cerro Gordo election. Dividing this figure by the number in the rural sample, a percentage estimate of 27.6 was obtained.

The estimate for the urban election was obtained in a similar manner. Replies indicating an intent to vote were recieved from 49 urban sample members. This number was reduced proportionately by the per cent of Clinton urban sample members who actually voted. The resulting number of respondents was 12.2 (49 times 28.3 per cent). Only 11 urban respondents in the Cerro Gordo sample indicated that they probably would vote. However, if as in the Clinton election, only 4.3 per cent actually did so, then it was again fair to assume that only 4.7 respondents (11 times 4.3 per cent) would appear at the polls. Dividing 16.9 respondents (12.2 plus 4.7) by the number in the urban sample, a percentage estimate of 17.7 was obtained.

The question can now be raised with respect to how close these percentage estimates were to the percentages obtained from the actual election. Table XI presents this comparison.

It is evident from the table that the sample predictions again over-estimated the percentage of voters who would appear at the polls. But the discrepancies are not as large as was true in the Clinton Study. According to a school official in this area the weather conditions on the day of the election were extremely bad and consequently not as many voters voted as might have under normal circumstances.[30] These conditions may help to explain the discrepancies noted in Table XI.

Confidence in respondents' commitments.--It will be remembered in the Clinton study that about 35 per cent of all rural and urban sample members who said they intended to vote (either "For" or "Against") actually did so. Only 11 per cent of those who said they probably would vote actually did so.

The results obtained by studying the Cerro Gordo election indicated that 22 per cent of those who said they intended to vote actually did so. Only 6 per cent of those who thought they probably would vote appeared at the polls. Undoubtedly the percentages in the Cerro Gordo study are somewhat lower than they would have been if weather conditions on the day of the election had been better. But even so, the ratio found to exist between an expressed intent and a probably intent of voting was nearly the same in both studies, about 3 to 1.

Table XII presents an analysis of the Cerro Gordo response in terms of the per cent of respondents who actually voted at the polls.

The same three observations which were made following the analysis of the Clinton response on this basis can be made from the data presented in Table VI. For the convenience of the reader they are here reiterated. First, if a rural respondent said that he intended to vote or that he probably would vote, it was more likely for him to do so than in the case of an urban respondent giving similar commitments. Secondly, those respondents who said they intended to vote, either "For" or "Against" were much more likely to do so than those who said they "probably would vote but uncertain how." The third observation which was evident in both the Clinton and Cerro analysis was that when a respondent said he "did not intend to vote," he meant just that.

The response to the three supplemental questions.--It has been mentioned previously that the postal-card questionnaire contained three additional opinion questions relative to reorganization issues. The response to these items is presented in Section III.

## The Implications

It is true that the predictions reported in this section were fairly accurate as validated against election returns. However, it does not necessarily follow that the usefulness of the technique is limited to the extent to which the prediction is exact. Elections on

29. See Table VI.

30. From interview with Clark Youmans, former principal of Cerro Gordo high School and now superintendent of the new unit district.

reorganization issues and most all other educational issues demand only a majority vote to carry. The important thing for the educator to know is not exactly what per cent of the people hold favorable opinions, but rather do a majority of the voters hold favorable opinions. In other words, will the election carry? The technique is useful, then, in this respect.

Reorganization issues are not the only school matters decided at the polls by the voters. Many issues relative to financial support must be submitted to voters for approval. Changes in tax rates, bond issues, acquisition and disposition of property, all require the voters' stamp of approval at the polls. With some preliminary testing and experimentation the technique might be useful in these instances.

## Section III

### A Study of the Opinions of Various Subgroups From the Clinton and Cerro Gordo Samples on Three Selected Reorganization Issues

At this point it has been demonstrated that a fairly dependable prediction can be made of the outcome of a school district election by sampling the opinions of all eligible registered voters living within the proposed district. Attention is now directed to a consideration of the three questions included on the postal-card questionnaire in the Clinton and Cerro Gordo Surveys.

These three questions, referred to in Section II, are here reproduced for the convenience of the reader:

In my opinion, combining school districts would make possible:
(Check once for each statement)

a. Better schools Yes____; No____; Uncertain____
b. More economies in expenditures Yes____; No____; Uncertain____
c. A fairer distribution of the tax burden Yes____; No____; Uncertain____

In short, the items dealt with what results respondents expected from reorganized districts. The questions were presented in this abbreviated form because of space limitation on the postal-card. They were included on the card to explore the possibility that a variation in opinion on these items might exist between the groups of voters who gave different responses to the question on the card asking them how they were going to vote in the coming election. In other words, if an individual stated that he intended to vote "Yes" in the election, did he also believe that combining school districts makes possible better schools? If a voter said that he intended to vote "No" in the election, did he also believe that better schools are not made possible by combining districts? What opinions on these items were held by those who had little or no intention of voting?

In attempting to answer these questions, the responses of the Clinton and Cerro Gordo respondents were analyzed. Tables XIII, XIV, and XV present the responses to the three supplementary questions included on the postal-card questionnaires and referred to in Section II.

It will be recalled that the major purpose of this analysis was to determine whether or not the response to the three questions given by the various sample subgroups differed to any major extent. What evidence is there from the data in Tables XIII, XIV, and XV to support the contention that major differences existed?

The following conclusions can be made from an observation of the responses to all three of the questions:

1. "Yes" answers to the questions are associated more frequently with the sample group which expressed an intention of voting "For" new school district proposals.
2. "No" answers to the questions are associated more frequently with the sample group which expressed an intention of voting "Against" new school district proposals.
3. "Uncertain" answers to the questions are associated more frequently with the sample group which said they probably would vote in the elections but were not sure how and with the sample group which expressed no intention of voting.

These three conclusions indicate clearly that some relationship existed between how a respondent said he intended to vote and how he answered the three questions. It is not the purpose of this chapter to describe statistically the nature of all of the associations presented in the previous tables. However, it does appear in order to examine the possibility that mere chance may have had some effect upon the distribution of responses presented in the pre-

ceding tables. Let us therefore examine statistically this possibility with respect to the frequency distribution of responses obtained for the first question. To this question, which asked "Do you think combining school districts will make possible better schools?", 66 respondents answered "yes", 0 answered "no", and 3 said "uncertain". All 69 (66 plus 0 plus 3) of these Clinton respondents said they intended to vote for the establishment of the proposed Clinton district. One procedure for examining the extent to which an observed frequency distribution could have occurred by chance is to introduce the null hypothesis and then to apply a Chi-square test which makes it possible either to retain or to reject the hypothesis. The null hypothesis in the example cited says that such a distribution (66-0-3) could easily have occurred by chance. Applying the formula for Chi-square[31]

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(f_s - f_h)^2}{f_h}$$

we find that the Chi-square value for the example is 120.78. For two degrees of freedom, the probability is .001 (or one in a thousand) that one would obtain a value greater than 13.82. Obviously, on the basis of the large value of Chi-square in our example, we would reject the null hypothesis and conclude that some factor other than chance was operating to produce the kind of distribution obtained.

All of the frequency distribution of the responses to question one were tested in this manner, and in no case was the probability as great as .02 (or 2 in a 100) that chance alone could produce Chi-square values as large as those obtained.

Before drawing conclusions from the preceding analysis, it appears important to consider further the data presented in the preceding tables. These additional observations seem pertinent.

1. Of the sample group which expressed an intention of voting "For" new school district proposals, only a very small per cent (ranging from 0-4 per cent) answered "No" to the questions. The "Uncertain" percentages for this same group ranged from 3 per cent to 26 per cent.

2. Part of the sample group which expressed an intention of voting "Against" new school district proposals, responded "Yes" to the three questions. The percentages are here reproduced for convenience: 12, 15, 16, 24; and 0, 14. This would indicate that for some voters, at least, factors other than these described in the three questions were operating at the time the respondent was in the process of reaching a decision of voting "for" or "against" at the polls.

3. The two sample groups who said they "probably would vote but uncertain how" and "do not intend to vote" were less certain in responding to the three questions than were those groups which had already made up their minds on how to vote at the polls. However, there is some evidence, particularly in Table XIII, that the "Yes" responses to the questions of these two sample groups were proportionately larger than the "No" responses.

## Conclusion

The question was raised earlier in this section with respect to the extent of difference existing between various sample subgroups in their response to three selected opinion items. Evidence was presented from an analysis of the opinions given by subgroups of the Clinton and Cerro Gordo samples. The evidence indicated that major differences of opinion existed with respect to the three selected items between the various subgroups and that some factor other than chance was operating to produce the obtained pattern of responses.

Therefore, it appeared logical to conclude that further investigation of this aspect of the problem was warranted. What opinions are held by voters on other reorganization issues? What clashes of opinion are there on various reorganization issues among voters of different ages or of different sex? Is educational achievement associated with variations in opinion on such issues? Do property owners favor reorganizations? To answer these questions and others it was necessary to conduct a more intensive study of public opinion as related to reorganization issues. The occasion for this study, the procedure used and an analysis of the results are presented in the next section of this thesis.

31. See John Gray Peatman, Descriptive and Sampling Statistics (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), pp. 424-437, for a discussion of this technique.

## Section IV

## Polling Opinion on Certain Educational Issues Pertaining to the Reorganization of School Districts in Champaign County, Illinois

### Procedure

Evidence presented in the preceding section indicated that further investigation of the opinions held by voters on reorganization issues was warranted. An opportunity to make such an investigation, in a limited fashion, came about when the Champaign County School Survey Committee requested the Bureau of Research and Service of the College of Education, University of Illinois, to conduct a public opinion survey in this county.

At the time of the request (February, 1948), the Survey Committee had already submitted its tentative recommendations for reorganizing the school districts in the county and had conducted a series of public hearings on this report. The committee's recommendations for reorganizing the Champaign County school districts included proposed unit districts at Fisher, Rantoul, Mahomet, Champaign, Urbanna, St. Joseph, Sidney-Homer, and Tolono-Sadorus-Philo. It was also proposed that two areas in the county be included as parts of districts located in adjoining counties.

The purposes for which the opinion survey was requested were (1) to find out what voters in Champaign County thought about the eight district proposal recommended in the report, (2) to determine the attitude of voters with respect to a single board or separate boards of education for grade schools and high schools--or in other words, to what extent did voters approve of unit type districts, (3) to discover whether or not voters favored the use of advisory councils for school boards, and (4) to find out any other information which might be helpful to the Survey Committee in revising its tentative report before submitting it in final form, June 1, 1948. These purposes were discussed at a joint meeting of the Survey Committee and members of the Bureau of Research and Service Staff. It was further agreed that a report of the opinion survey was to be submitted to the Survey Committee by April 30, 1948, so that the findings of the survey might be carefully studied by the Committee prior to the revision of the tentative report.

#### Determining the Issues to be Studied.

In the selection of the issues for study four limiting criteria were used: (1) the orginial purposes of the survey must be fulfilled, (2) complicated topics requiring unusual professional knowledge must be avoided, (3) the inclusion of the three issues used in the preliminary investigation in the Clinton and Cerro Gordo prediction studies (see Section IV), and (4) each issue must be of importance to the problem of school district reorganization because the interview schedule, to be economical in time and money, had to consist of relatively few items.

In the final selection of issues for study, consideration was also given to the public information campaign which had been underway during the several months preceding and following the release of the tentative report. This campaign included meetings, discussions, speeches, newspaper articles and radio programs.

#### Designing the Interview Schedule.

A tentative schedule was drafted in accord with the criteria mentioned in the previous section. This preliminary draft was then submitted to several individuals for criticism. Following a revision of the form it was then pre-tested in a series of exploratory interviews. As a result of this procedure additional revisions were made, particularly in the wording of the questions. For example, on the preliminary form Question 12 read:

> "Some people think that school board should have an advisory council. Would you favor or oppose such a plan?"

Because a number of the respondents in the exploratory interviews failed to understand the meaning of the term "advisory council", the wording of the question was changed to read:

> "Some people think that a school board should have a group of representative local citizens to act as advisors. These advisors would help the board to find out what the wishes of the people are concerning school matters. Would you favor or oppose such a plan?"

The form of the interview schedule used in the Champaign County opinion poll is reproduced herewith, beginning on page 410.

The items on personal data (from Question 16 through 22) were included so that the representativeness of the sample might be appraised and so that respondents' opinions might be classified according to various background factors.

#### Selecting the Sample to be Interviewed.

The task of assessing the opinion of the voters in Champaign County on certain reorganization issues involved the further utilization of sampling techniques. The process of designing the sample was somewhat complicated by

Code Number_____

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHAMPAIGN COUNTY OPINION POLL ON SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION**

1. At the present time there are about 212 school districts in Champaign County. Which of these answers best expresses how you feel about this number of districts? (Read answer and encircle the letter of the answer selected by the respondent.)
   a. I am sure that we should have fewer districts.
   b. We probably should have fewer districts.
   c. I am uncertain
   d. We probably should have this many districts.
   e. I am sure that we should have this many districts.

2. About how much have you happened to read in the newspapers about reorganization in this county? (Encircle letter which most nearly corresponds with the respondent's answer.)
   a. Quite a lot b. Some but not too much c. Very little or none

3. By the way, did you get to attend the public hearing held here in your district by the Survey Committee?
   a. Yes b. No c. Didn't know there was one

FOR INFORMATION OF INTERVIEWER:

| Public Hearing | Date | Location |
|---|---|---|
| Area 1 | Jan. 7 | Fisher H. S. |
| Area 2 | Jan. 5 | Rantoul H. S. |
| Area 3 | Jan. 13 | Mahomet H. S. |
| Area 4 | Jan. 26 | Champaign H. S. |
| Area 5 | Jan. 28 | Urbana H. S. |
| Area 6 | Jan. 8 | St. Joe H. S. |
| Area 7 | Jan. 15 | Sadorus H. S. |
| Area 8 | Jan. 14 | Sidney H. S. |
| The following two areas are in the county but NOT PART of the eight proposed districts. | | |
| N. E. Corner | Jan. 27 | Penfield G. S. |
| South Crittenden | Jan. 29 | Smith School, Pesotum |

4. I suppose you have seen this map before? (Show map which outlines the 8 districts. This map has appeared in the newspapers.)
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don't remember

5. Here is about where you live on this map, isn't it? According to the Survery Committee's recommendation you would be in THIS school district. How do you feel about being in THIS school district? (Record answer verbatim.)

6. In what size high school do you think a modern educational program can be offered most economically? (Read answers a, b, c, and d; encircle proper letter.)
   a. over 500 students
   b. from 300 to 500 students
   c. from 100 to 300 students, or
   d. less than 100 students
   e. don't know

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (Continued)

7. In what size grade school, grades one to eight, do you think a modern educational program can be offered most economically? (Read answers a, b, c, d; encircle proper letter.)
   a. over 500 students
   b. from 300 to 500 students
   c. from 100 to 300 students, or
   d. less than 100 students
   e. don't know

8. Do you think that combining school districts will make possible better schools? Tell me which of these answers best expresses you opinion (read answers and encircle proper letter):
   a. I am positive that it will
   b. I think that it might
   c. I am uncertain
   d. I doubt that it will
   e. I am positive that it will not

9. Do you think that combining school districts will make possible a fairer distribution of the tax burden? Tell me which of these answers best expresses your opinions. (Read answers and encircle proper letter.)
   a. I am positive that it will
   b. I think that it might
   c. I am uncertain
   d. I doubt that it will
   e. I am positive that it will not

10. Do you think that combining school districts will make possible more economies in expenditures? Tell me which of these answers best expresses your opinion. (Read answers and encircle proper letter.)
   a. I am positive that it will
   b. I think that it might
   c. I am uncertain
   d. I doubt that it will
   e. I am positive that it will not

11. Some people tell us that all the grades, one through twelve, in a given area should be under one board of education. Other people say that there should be one board for the high school and another board for the grade school. Which of the following answers most nearly expresses how you feel about this? (Read answers and encircle proper letter.)
   a. I am positive that we should have one board of education for grades one through twelve.
   b. I think we probably should have one board for grades one through twelve.
   c. I am uncertain.
   d. I think that we probably should have one board for the high school and another board for the grade school.
   e. I am positive that we should have one board for the high school and another board for the grade school.

12. Some people think that a school board should have a group of represenative local citizens to act as advisors. These advisors would help the board to find out what the wishes of the people are concerning school matters. Would you favor or oppose such a plan? (Encircle letter which most nearly corresponds to respondent's opinion.)
   a. favor  b. don't know  c. oppose

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (Continued)

13. In its Tentative Report, the Champaign County Survey Committee has recommended eight school districts for this county. Which of these answers best expresses how you feel about this recommendation? (Read answers and encircle proper letter.)
    a. I am sure that this is the best plan for the county
    b. I guess that this is about the best thing to do
    c. I have no opinion on this matter
    d. I don't believe that this is a very good idea
    e. I am sure that this is not the best plan for the county

14. Some people have recommended a county unit school district, which would mean one school district for Champaign County. Would you favor or oppose such a plan? (Encircle letter which most nearly corresponds to respondent's opinion.)
    a. F A V O R ! b. favor c. don't know d. oppose e. O P P O S E !
    (For interviewer: If you have encircled "a" or "e" please give evidence for doing so):_____

15. Which of the following statements tells best how you feel about combining Champaign and Urbana into one school district? (Read answers and encircle proper letter.)
    a. I am absolutely positive that this is what ought to be done
    b. I am not too sure, but guess that it is the best thing to do
    c. I have no opinion on this matter
    d. I don't believe that this would be a very good idea
    e. I am absolutely positive that this should not be done

PERSONAL DATA

16. Do you have any children in grade school or in high school? (Encircle proper letter.)
    a. Yes b. No

    IF YES:

    A. What grades are they in ? (Record number children in appropriate cell.)

| Grade School | | High School |
|---|---|---|
| 1-4 | 5-8 | 9-12 |
| ____ | ____ | ____ |

    B. What are the names of the schools they attend?
    Grade School _____
    High School _____

17. Do you remember the name of the last school YOU went to? (Write name of school here_____
    A. What was the last grade you completed in school?_____
    TO BE CODED BY INTERVIEWER: (Encircle proper letter.)
    a. grade school non-graduate
    b. grade school graduate and high school non-graduate
    c. high school graduate
    d. college non-graduate
    e. college graduate

18. May I ask in which of these brackets you age is? (Read appropriate brackets. If respondent will not answer, estimate age and label "estimate".)
    a. 21 - 30 d. 51 - 60
    b. 31 - 40 e. 61 - 70
    c. 41 - 50 f. Over 70

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (Continued)**

19. Sex (Do not ask) a. Male b. Female

20. Do you own or rent your home? a. Own b. rent
IF YOU HAVE ENCIRCLED "b":
Do you own any property in this county? a. yes b. no

21. ECONOMIC LEVEL TO BE JUDGED BY INTERVIEWER (Encircle proper letter)
a. Wealthy
b. Upper middle class
c. Middle class
d. Poor

22. What is the occupation of the main earner in your family? (Include both the individual's job and the industry in which he is employed.)

THANK YOU!

Please check questionnaire to see that answers are clearly marked and that there are no omissions or errors.

Signed by Interviewer:

the fact that much of the voting population in Champaign County (62 per cent) is concentrated in the Twin Cities--Champaign and Urbana. There were further considerations in the course of designing the sample. How large should the sample be?[32] How large should each subsample be? If a comparison of the opinions of rural voters and urban voters were to be made, it was necessary to design the sample so that the rural subsample would be large enough to make fairly accurate estimates of the opinion status of this group. Furthermore, if a description of the attitude of the Twin Cities' voters on the issue of merging the two school districts were to be made, it was also necessary to design the overall sample so that the Twin Cities subsample would be large enough to answer this question.

Also entering into the picture at this point was the time element. If the report of the opinion survey was to be transmitted to the Champaign County Survey Committee at the agreed upon time (April 30, 1948) it would be necessary to limit the size of the sample to such a point that the interview work could be completed in ample time to complie the data and report the results. It was also necessary to keep in mind the fact that interviewing rural respondents created the problem of transportation into rural areas.

In view of the preceding considerations a sample was designed which would include about 100 rural voters and 100 Twin Cities voters. The urban segment of the total sample would include the 100 Twin Cities' voters plus a proportionate representation from the urban centers in the remainder of the county. The total sample, then, would contain three distinct sub-samples: (1) the rural subsample, (2) the urban Twin Cities subsample, and (3) the urban (excluding Twin Cities) subsample. In order to increase the efficiency of the over-all sample,[33] each subsample was stratified in terms of the geographical location of voters. This process was made possible by using the 80 general election precinct lists of registered voters' names and addresses which were available from the county clerk's office.

Table XVI presents the tentative distribution of sample cases which was made on the basis of the considerations discussed in the preceding paragraphs.

From Table XVI it can be observed that the allotted size of the total sample was 302. It is further evident that the rural and Twin Cities subsample quotas contained approximately 100 voters each. The quotas presented in the table were arrived at by using a sample ratio of 1/250 for the Twin Cities subsample and 1/90 for the rural and urban (excluding Twin Cities) subsamples. Disproportionate representation in these subsamples necessitated the use of weighting procedures in arriving at an estimated county-wide percentage of response to any item. This procedure is explained later in this section.

The process of actually selecting the sample cases involved the use of the 80 Champaign County precinct list of voters' names and addresses which were secured from the county clerk's office. Before the lists were used for purposes of selecting the sample, each one had been processed by (1) eliminating the names of those voters who had died or who had moved out of the precinct, and by (2) adding the names of those voters who had recently moved into the precinct from out-of-the county or from other precincts. At the time the sample was drawn, it was not known how accurate the Champaign County precinct lists were in terms of containing up-to-date information. It was discovered later that in a number of instances the county clerk's office had not recieved accurate information from local precinct committee chairmen with respect to the addition of eligible voters' names and the elimination of ineligible voters' names.

Since the task of drawing the sample involved a consideration of nearly 50,000 names, it was decided not to use the manual counting method of selecting the names of voters to be interviewed. Rather, two pieces of string were used for this purpose. One segment of string represented the average space occupied by 90 names and was used in the process of drawing the rural and urban (excluding Twin Cities) subsamples from the precinct voting lists. The second piece of string was used for the selection of the sample members in the Twin Cities subsample and represented the average space occupied by 250 names.

The size of the sample actually drawn very closely approximated the allotted sample size. A comparison of the allotted sample size and the actual number of cases selected is presented in Table XVII.

Having determined the issues to be studied and the names of voters to be interviewed, it is now in order to consider the actual pro-

32. See Appendix A, Size of Sample, thesis, University of Illinois Library.

33. See Appendix B, thesis, University of Illinois Library.

cess of conducting the interviews.

Conducting the Interviews.

After individual conferences had been held with applicants, a group of interviewers was selected from (1) graduate assistants in the College of Education, University of Illinois, (2) graduate students of the college, and (3) upper-classmen in the University of Illinois. Approximately half of the people selected had had some interviewing experience.

In order to assure uniformity in procedure a training period was held during which time the project was discussed at length. A special interviewer's manual[34] was prepared specifically for this project. Interviewers were given copies of this manual for one week's study. Near the close of the training period each interviewer conducted at least one trial interview after which he reported back to the meeting with any special problems he had encountered. Further instructions to interviewers are included in the manual and do not need repetition here.

Interviewers were instructed to report at headquarters at the close of each day's work so that their completed schedules might be carefully checked and their work supervised. During the course of a ten-day period the work of interviewing was completed. Generally speaking, the cooperation secured from respondents was more than satisfactory.

During the course of the ten-day period interviewers traveled some 2000 miles in rural areas. Throughout the study interviewers averaged one interview per hour, including travel time between the interviews. The average lengthe for an interview itself was 18.4 minutes.

Attention is now directed to a consideration of an analysis of the interview returns.

Analysis of Interview Returns

After the interview returns were carefully checked and edited, there remained for purposes of this study 287 usable schedules. It will be remembered that originally 293 sample cases had been selected. Table XVIII presents a comparison of the actual number of usable schedules with the original number of sample cases selected.

Table XVIII indicates that the returns were almost complete for two of the subsamples and complete for the Twin Cities subsample. These figures indicate a desirable feature of the method used in this study--that is, interviewing sample members selected from precinct lists of voters' names and addresses. It was possible to obtain responses from nearly all of the sample cases selected. This method tends to reduce the amount of error which can creep into a research study because of non-response.

The interview returns were studied for two major purposes: (1) to study the sample in order to check upon the extent to which it reproduced certain characteristics of the total universe, and (2) to analyze respondent opinion both in its entirety and in parts.

Checking the Sample Used.

The method of selecting the sample has been described in a previous part of this section. The purpose of this part is to study the sample in order to check upon the extent to which it reproduced certain characteristics of the total universe.

Table XIX shows various background factors of the population of Champaign County as distributed in the population of voting age in the county and in the sample studied.

Table XIX indicates that when respondents are classified according to racial groups, 3.74 percent are Negro and 96.26 percent are white. For the county as a whole the 1940 Federal Census indicated that 2.97 percent were Negro and 97.03 were white. Here the difference is only 1.77 percent.

Classification of respondents by age groups was somewhat more difficult since the categories used in the interview schedule did not correspond exactly to the groupings utilized in the census report. However, it is possible to note similar tendencies in the distribution among the various categories.

When respondents were classified according to sex, 44.77 per cent were males while in the county as a whole 50.68 per cent were males. The proportion of males and females in the sample studied appears to be somewhat unrepresentative of the population of the county as a whole. The effect of the difference between sample characteristics with respect to sex and those of the county as a whole may be eliminated by weighting techniques. In a later portion of this section consideration is given to the discrepancies in terms of the sex factor and the resulting shifts in opinion findings are small. Had additional time been available for purposes of this study, the sex factor could have been accounted for by further stratification of the sample.

Classification of respondents by educational

34. See Appendix C, thesis, University of Illinois Library.

levels produces a distribution which resembles the distribution of the population over 25 years of age in the county as a whole.

A further check of the sample used was obtained by comparing the replies to Question 4 of the interview schedule, which asked respondents whether or not they had attended the public hearings held on the Survey Committee's proposal. A fairly reliable attendance estimate was secured from the county superintendent of schools who was in charge of these hearings. Table XX presents the results of this comparison.

It will be remembered that the sample was so designed that one of the subsamples represented a complete sample for the Twin Cities --Champaign and Urbana. This was done so that opinions on a special issue of local importance--the merger of the Twin Cities' two school districts--could be obtained. At an election held some three weeks after this opinion poll was conducted, voters in the Twin Cities and in the rural area surrounding the two towns were given an opportunity to decide the issue by ballot. The election carried favorably in the urban area but lost in the rural area by 134 votes. The results of the urban election provided an opportunity to check the extent to which the favorable response from the Twin Cities subsample corresponded with the favorable percentage of votes cast in the election. Table XXI makes this comparison.

The evidence presented in the preceding three tables, namely, XIX, XX, and XXI indicates first of all that the sample used compares closely with the entire universe. Secondly, it indicates the rarely understood point that if proper sampling techniques are used a very small number of cases, such as used in this study, produces usable results comparing closely enough to results which would be obtained by making a complete enumeration to satisfy most practical purposes.

The Entire Sample Response

The first objective in analyzing the interview returns was to check upon the extent to which the sample reproduced certain characteristics of the total universe. The second major objective in studying the data gathered through interviews was to analyze respondent opinion. Two forms of analysis were employed. First, divisions of opinion for each item were studied in terms of the total response. Second, respondents were classified according to the following background factors: age, sex, education status, economic level, residence, property ownership, school patronage, and informational status. The opinions of the resulting subgroups were than studied.

Table XXII presents a general summary of the response to opinion items of the interview schedule. Items 2, 3, and 4 are omitted since they were not opinion questions.

In order to arrive at the percentage distribution of the responses of the entire sample as presented in Table XXII, it was necessary to employ a simple weighting procedure. Since the three subsamples--rural, Twin Cities, and urban (excluding Twin Cities)--were not proportional of the total number of eligible voters in each of these three areas, a procedure was employed to assign a proper weight to the responses from each subsample. In essence this meant that each subsample response would have to be multiplied by a weighting factor so that the response would proportionately represent the response of the eligible voters in that particular area. The resulting weighted subsample responses were then summed to obtain the total sample response for the county. The weighting factors used follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Rural Subsample response | .2320 |
| Urban (excluding Twin Cities response) | .1443 |
| Twin Cities response | .6237 |
| TOTAL | 1.0000 |

The number of eligible rural voters in the county was equivalent to 23.20 per cent of the total number of eligible voters in the county. Hence, the weighting factor of .2320 was employed on the rural subsample response. Similarly, the number of eligible Twin Cities voters in the county was equivalent to 62.37 per cent of the total number of eligible voters in the county and the corresponding weighting factor .6237 was employed. The third factor was determined in a similar manner.

The data for Question 15 were obtained from the Champaign-Urbana urban subsample. It appeared that an analysis of the responses of this group of voters to Question 15 was more important than was an analysis of the responses of the total sample of voters since the question itself concerned a localized issue. Throughout the remainder of this analysis the data for this question will represent the response of the Twin Cities subsample. In a previous section reference was made to an appraisal of this subsample.

Number of Districts.--Three questions (1, 13, and 14), the replies to which are summarized in Table XXII, dealt with issues which center around the number of school districts which there should be in Champaign

County.

Question 1 was designed so that it could be determined from the responses whether or not respondents favored any reduction in the "present number of school districts." Respondents favored fewer than the present number of school districts and hence some kind of reorganization; 60.8 per cent of those replying favored fewer districts and 11.2 per cent believed the number of districts should remain in the same, or in other words opposed reorganization of any kind. The size of the uncertain response was unusally large. It was 27.9 per cent and on one item only was this per cent exceeded. The per cent appears almost alarming when we consider that the issue at stake is one which involves the future educational welfare of the children and adults in this county. Examining the responses of only those who held an opinion, we find that 84.4 per cent favored fewer than the present number of districts.

Although respondents favored fewer districts, they were not as decisive in their opinions as to how many districts there should be. To Question 13, which asked whether the eight district recommendation of the Survey Committee was the best plan for the county, 48.2 per cent indicated that it was,while 20.4 per cent indicated that it was not. The uncertain response was the largest for any item, 31.4 per cent, or nearly one-third.

Respondents did not leave much doubt as to their attitude toward a single county unit district for Champaign County. To Question 14, which asked whether respondents would favor or oppose such a district for the county, 11.6 per cent replied "favor" while 64.4 per cent replied "oppose."

What, then, do the replies to these three questions indicate? First, respondents definitely favor fewer than the "present number of districts." Second, they definitely oppose reducing the number of districts to one single county district. Third, about one-half of the respondents believe that the eight district plan is the best plan for the county. Some further indication as to the number of districts for the county can be secured indirectly upon examining respondents' opinions to questions concerned with the optimum size of grade schools and high schools.

Size of schools.--Summarized in the table are the responses to two questions (6 and 7) relating to the optimum size of schools in terms of student enrollment. To Question 6, which asked the size of the high school in which a modern program of education could be offered most economically, 67.2 per cent replied in high schools with enrollments 300 and over, while only 17.3 per cent said in high schools with enrollments under 300. The enrollment figure of 300 was used as a dividing point for the responses because this is the number which had most often been recommended as the minimum size for the operation of an economical high school program. It is based on the results of a study made by a special state commission.[35]

Of those who replied, 73.5 per cent believed that a modern educational program could be offered most economically by grade schools with enrollments 100 and over; only 8.4 per cent said in grade schools with enrollments under 100. The enrollment figure of 100 was used as a dividing point for the responses so that all responses in categories above this point could be considered as definitely opposed to the one-room rural school as the optimum size for grade schools.

An examination of the actual enrollment data for Champaign County reveals that there are approximately 3000 high school students. Three high schools, namely Champaign, Urbana, and Rantoul already have enrollments of 300 or over. Their combined enrollments total approximately 1800. This leaves a remainder of about 1200 high school students in the county. If we apply the criteria of 300 for the minimum size, it is evident that four high schools are needed. This would result in a total seven high schools for the county, excluding the University of Illinois High School in Urbana.

Control of districts.--Two questions, namely, 11 and 12, dealt with issues which arose out of the control of school districts. To Question 11, which asked whether there should be a single board of education for grades one through twelve in a given district or whether there should be separate boards, only 34.0 per cent of those who replied favored a single board while 58.5 per cent favored separate boards. This response was the only response which was in outright opposition to leading educational thought. Educators are in almost universal agreement as to the superiority of the unit district with a single board of education.[36]

Question 12, which asked whether or not a

35. School Finance and Tax Commission, State of Illinois, State Support of Public Education in Illinois, March 1947.

36. M. R. Sumption, and H. D. Beem, A Guide to School Reorganization in Illinois (Urbana: Bureau of Educational Research, University of Illinois, 1947), p. 39.

school board should have an advisory council, was inserted into the interview schedule at the request of the Champaign County Survey Committee. A majority of those who replied, 66.3 per cent, favored such councils while 22.2 per cent opposed.

Results expected from reorganized districts.--Three questions, 8, 9, and 10, dealt with issues which arose out of the claimed benefits for reorganizing school districts. It has been pointed out[37] that enlarged districts make possible many benefits. Among these are: (1) better schools, (2) fairer distribution of the tax burden, and (3) more economies in expenditures.

To Question 8, which asked whether combining school districts made possible better schools, 71.3 per cent replied "yes," and 17.1 per cent replied "no."

There was more uncertainty in the responses to Question 9, which asked if combining school districts made possible a fairer distribution of the tax burden. To this question 59.2 per cent said "yes," 15.6 per cent said "no," and 25.2 per cent were uncertain.

In response to Question 10, which asked if combining school districts made possible more economies in expenditures, 65.5 per cent said "yes" and 15.9 per cent said "no."

It appears then that a majority of those who responded were aware of the possibility of certain definite benefits to be derived from a program of school district reorganization in Champaign County.

Special Questions.--Two questions, 5 and 14, were of a special nature and need consideration at this point. The Champaign County Survey Committee recommended that the 212 school districts in the county be reorganized into eight new unit districts. Respondents were asked in Question 5 how they felt toward the new proposed school district in which they had been located by the Survey Committee's recommendation in the Tentative Report. The free answers to this question were coded into responses that indicated satisfaction, partial or total dissatisfaction, and uncertainty. To this Question, 49.3 per cent indicated satisfaction, while 24.2 per cent indicated partial or total dissatisfaction. The favorable response to this question agrees very well with the favorable responses to Question 13 which asked whether the respondent thought that the eight district plan was the best plan for the county. To the former question 49.3 responded favorably while to the latter question, 48.2 per cent responded favorably.

Question 14 represents a special issue in the reorganization movement in Champaign County. Considerable thought and action by some of the Champaign and Urbana residents had been given to the question of combining the school districts of the Twin Cities. Therefore a question was included in the interview schedule to examine the opinion status on this issue. To Question 14, which asked the respondents of the Twin City subsample whether they favor or oppose a merger of the two school districts, 48.2 per cent replied "favor," 37.3 per cent replied "oppose,"and 14.6 per cent were uncertain. Of those who held opinions on this issue 56.4 per cent favored the merger while 43.6 per cent opposed it. Reference was made in a previous part of this section to the actual outcome of the urban election on this issue in which 58.8 per cent favored the merger and 41.2 per cent opposed it.

Voluntary comments.--From the free response questions and from additional comments noted on the interview schedules by the interviewers, it was possible to code a number of voluntary statements made by the respondents. A concern over matters pertaining to transportation of students, particularly small children, was expressed by 21.2 per cent of the rural respondents. Comments relating to "keeping a school in my community" were made by 12.4 per cent of the rural respondents. Nearly 11 percent of the total sample indicated that the question had not been studied enough in order to form definite opinions on matters pertaining to reorganization. The same idea was expressed by 37.3 per cent of the urban Champaign-Urbana respondents. Perhaps the most significant comments made were those which indicated that the respondents had little or no interest in the matter of reorganization or of schools in general since they had no children in school. Nearly 25 per cent of the Champaign-Urbana respondents indicated this attitude. Other comments included such statements as (1) "They should give us more and clearer information about this whole thing." (2) "My opinions don't matter; they'll do what they want to anyway!" (3) "What's it going to do to my taxes?" and (4) "I don't know enough about reorganization; let the educators do it."

Summary of the total response.--The total response indicated that respondents favored fewer than "the present number" of school districts, and opposed the establishment of a single county unit school district. About half of the respondents thought that the eight district plan was the best plan for the county. A majority

37. See Section I.

of those replying believed that high schools with enrollments 100 and over could offer modern programs of education most economically. Respondents indicated preference for separate boards of education for the grade and high schools in a given district and the use of an advisory council for boards of education. The total response further indicates and expectation that combining school districts would make possible better schools, a fairer distribution of the tax burden, and more economics in expenditures.

Sampling Error.--In the course of the Champaign County study, usable interview forms were returned for 287 voters. The question may now be raised whether the responses of these voters indicate the opinions of the total voting population in Champaign County. To answer this question it is necessary to turn to statistical procedures for determining reliability of sample observations.

The statistical technique used to determine reliability for random sample observations is a simple one. In this instance the technique was to determine for each item the standard error of the percentage of favorable (or "a") responses. From each standard error, limits have been calculated as if for a random sample from an infinite population. That is to say, the standard error formula[38] for an unrestricted random sample has been applied. However, since the sample was stratified the stated limits of error are considered maxima since due to stratification the error should be less than the error computed by the unrestricted random formula.[39] The results of these computations are presented in Table XXIII.

Referring to Table XXIII, one finds recorded the percentage of favorable (or "a") responses to each opinion item. For Question 1, which deals with the issue of whether there should be fewer districts in the county, the favorable percentage is 60.82. The standard error of the per cent is 2.88. From this standard error an interval estimate was made, i.e., confidence limits were established. The limits were 55.18 and 66.46. In other words, one may infer that if the entire voting population of Champaign County were interviewed, in ninety-five times out of a hundred the resulting percentage of favorable responses to Question 1 would fall between the stated limits.

Study of Table XXIII will reveal that all of the differences between the upper and lower confidence limits are, with one exception, approximately ten per cent. The exception is in Question 15, where the interval range is 18.68. This is accounted for by the fact that the response to this item was obtained from only a subsample of the total sample.

Weighting of responses in terms of the sex factor.--In the part which checked the extent to which the sample reproduced certain characteristics of the total universe, it was shown that the proportions of the sample were not representative to some extent with respect to the sex factor. A simple weighting procedure was used to discover the extent to which a correction for the sex proportion would affect the total response. This procedure involved (1) increasing the male response by an amount which represented the extent to which male representation in the sample was less than the true male proportion, and (2) decreasing the female response by an amount which represented the extent to which female representation in the sample was more than the true female proportion.

The results of this procedure indicated clearly that the percentage shifts in the responses to all opinion items were indeed small. The general effect of this weighting procedure was to produce (1) a slight upward shift in the percentage of favorable (or "a") responses, and (2) a slight downward shift in the "uncertain" percentages. For example, let us consider Question 1 which asked whether or not there should be fewer districts in Champaign County. Table XXII indicated that 60.8 per cent said there should be fewer districts, 11.2 per cent said there should be no change, and 27.9 per cent were uncertain. When the weighting procedure was applied to these responses, 61.9 per cent said there should be fewer districts, 11.4 per cent said there should be no change, and 26.7 per cent were uncertain. Obviously the percentage shifts were small. This also was true when the weighting procedure was applied to the responses to the other opinion items. In none of the responses to Questions 1 through 14 was the percentage shift greater than 1.5 per cent. In the instance of Question 15, the shift was 4.9 per cent. Since the general effect upon the total response was negligible, no further use was made of this procedure.

## The Reflection of Background Factors in the Expression of Opinion

The total response to the opinion items has been presented and studied. It is of itself fundamentally important, but such an examination does not contribute much toward understanding differences associated with various social and economic groupings. Data obtained in the Champaign County study present many

38. Standard error is equal to the square root of $P\sqrt{}/N$.

39. See Appendix B, thesis, University of Illinois Library.

opportunities for intensive analysis. Of the multitude of questions which might arise at this point, obviously only the most important ones can be considered here. Are there differences in the opinions held by persons of rural and urban residence? Do opinions expressed by different age groups differ? Is there a contrast in opinions held by persons who are informed and uninformed on the problem of reorganization? Are there dissimilarities in the opinions held by persons of different educational status? Do opinions expressed by males and females differ? Are there any cleavages in opinion which might be associated with economic levels of respondents? Do persons who have children in school hold the same opinions as those who do not have children in school? And finally, is there a contrast in opinions held by property-owners and non-property owners? These are the major questions to be considered.

Classification of background factors.--Categories used in classifying respondents by background factors were:

1. Residence--rural and urban. The basis for determining the residence of the repondent was the legal provision in the County Survey Act which defines urban as any village or city with a population of 500 or more. Therefore the urban response represents the opinions of those persons residing in villages or cities with 500 or more inhabitants and the rural response represents the opinions of those persons residing on farms and in villages with populations under 500.

2. Age group--Classification in terms of persons 21-40 years of age and persons over 40 years of age.

3. Informational status.--Classification in terms of those respondents who were informed on reorganization matters in the county and those who were uninformed on such matters. The basis for classification in this instance was Question 2 in the interview schedule which asked, "About how much have you happened to read in the newspapers about reorganization in this county?" The free responses given were coded by the interviewers into the following categories: "quite a lot," "some but not too much," and "very little or none." Responses coded into the first two categories were arbitrarily classified as the "informed responses" and the responses which were coded into the third category were classified as the "uninformed responses."

4. Educational status--Classification in terms of school grades completed: 0-11, and 12 and over.

5. Sex.

6. Economic level--Classification in terms of interview estimates of the respondents' economic status. Respondents were placed into one of the following categories: wealthy, above average, average, and poor. For purposes of this study the first two categories and the last two categories were combined. Classification resulting: wealthy-above average group, and the average-poor group.

7. School patronage--Respondents who have children in school and respondents who have no children in school.

8. Property ownership--Respondents who own property in Champaign County and those who do not own property in this county.

Method of analyzing opinions in terms of background factors.--In analyzing the opinions in terms of the eight background factors referred to in the previous section, two procedures were used: (1) percentages were computed for different responses to each question for each of the various categories of respondent based on the classifications listed in the foregoing section, and (2) the significance of difference between the percentages was determined. This information for the eight categories is presented in Tables XXIV toXXXI.

The first of these two procedures--the presentation of simple per centage distributions--needs no further explanation. The second technique calls for further elaboration. A simple percentage distribution makes possible a comparison between sample responses. For example, it may be observed that 70 per cent of the property owners replied favorably to a given item and that 60 per cent of the non-property owners replied similarly to the same item. The percentage difference is, of course, 10 per cent. The question arises whether the percentage difference found in the sample can be considered as evidence that a percentage difference can be expected for the county as a whole. To discover whether or not this is true, a test of significance of differences between per cents must be applied.[40] This technique involves dividing the difference between the observed per cents by the standard error of the difference to obtain a "t" ratio. A "t" ratio as large as 1.96 or larger is significant at the .05 level of confidence, and a

40. See John Gray Peatman, Descriptive and Sampling Statistics (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), pp. 404-409, for a discussion of this technique.

ratio as large as 2.58 is significant at the .01 level of confidence. Ratios of this size or larger indicate that the observed differences were not due to chance alone. Caution should be exercised in the interpretation of the results obtained and presented in Table XXIV to XXXI. The significant differences noted were determined for sample responses. One cannot conclude that the same amount of difference would exist in the total voting population in the county. What one can safely say is that the differences would exist in the same direction.

The factor of residence.--Table XXIV presents responses classified according to the residence of the respondent. Three general observations seem evident from a casual examination of the rural-urban responses.

First, a general favorable attitude of the rural respondents toward reorganization is evident from the responses to Questions 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. This observation is important because in many of the reorganization elections which have already been held in Illinois, evidence supports the contention that it is generally in the rural areas where the reorganization proposals secured the most crucial tests.[41]

Second, while both rural and urban respondents generally expressed favorable opinions toward reorganization as evidenced by the responses to Questions 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, the urban favorable percentages were higher in all instances except in the first question.

Third, a tendency existed for more uncertainty in the urban response than in the rural response.

Of particular interest were the responses to Questions 6 and 7 which dealt with the size of high school and grade school in which modern programs of education could be offered most economically. The fact that 52.68 per cent of the rural responses to Question 6 were in the "300 and over" category was important since at that time there were no high schools in any of the rural area with enrollments that large.

To Question 7, 66.08 per cent of the rural respondents answered "in grade schools with enrollments 100 and over." In other words, this meant that two-thirds of the rural respondents felt that the one-room school was not the most economical school in which to offer a modern program of education.

Rural respondents were not as positive as to the expected results from reorganization as were urban respondents. Particularly was this true in matters pertaining to finance as illustrated by the responses to Questions 9 and 10.

Although both rural and urban respondents opposed the establishment of a county unit district, more opposition was expressed by the rural respondents.

Question 15, which dealt with the merger of the Champaign and Urbana school districts, needs special attention here. As indicated in the foot-note below the table, the rural responses represent the opinions of the respondents living in the county outside the Twin Cities while the urban responses represent the opinions of those respondents living within the Twin Cities. Since the issue was a local one, it is to be expected that the rural response would contain a greater amount of uncertainty than the urban response.

The factor of age.--The age factor appears to be associated with opinions related to reorganization issues. Table XXV presents in percentages the replies broken down according to age group of the respondent. The general pattern of response as recorded in Table XXV indicates with but one exception (1) higher percentages for the younger respondents to the more favorable (or "a") answers, (2) lower percentages for the same group to the more unfavorable (or "b") answers, and (3) lower percentages for the same group to the uncertain classification. It appears that in general, the younger respondents were more favorable to reorganization.

Of particular interest were the responses to Question 15 which dealt with the merger of the Champaign and Urbana school districts. Of the respondents in the 21-40 year bracket, 62.22 per cent expressed a favorable attitude and 28.89 per cent were unfavorable. Respondents in the older age group (over 40 years) opposed the merger 43.08 per cent to 38.46 per cent.

The factor of informational status.--As was pointed out earlier, respondents were classified as informed or uninformed on the question of reorganization in Champaign County. Table XXVI presents the percentage distribution for these two classifications.

The responses to Question 1, perhaps one of the most important items in the interview schedule, are of particular interest. This question, which asked respondents whether or not there should be "fewer than the present number" of districts, in reality asked the respondent whether or not he favored any kind of district re-

41. See Section I.

organization in the county. Of the informed group, 67.50 per cent were in favor of fewer districts while only 47.08 per cent of the uninformed group responded similarly. Of further interest was the fact that 41.91 per cent of the uninformed group were uncertain. This percentage was almost as large as the percentage which favored fewer districts.

The merger of the Champaign and Urbana school districts was favored by the informed group but opposed by the uninformed group. More than half of the former group favored the merger while more than half of the latter group opposed it.

Probably the most important generalization which can be made from an analysis of the informed and uninformed responses is the significant differences between the uncertain percentages. With but one exception in Question 15, the uninformed group was more uncertain in its responses to all of the questions than was the informed group. If it is true that the uninformed voters are always more uncertain than informed voters, then these results would appear to place much emphasis on the school's responsibility of keeping the public well-informed about educational policies, practices and proposals.

The factor of educational status.--Table XXVII presents the percentage distributions of the responses of those respondents who have completed 0-11 years of school and of those respondents who have completed 12 or more years of school. On the surface it would appear that a breakdown of the responses in terms of educational status would be important since the responses themselves pertain to educational issues. Upon studying Table XXVII one can conclude that there are significant differences between the opinions held by respondents of different educational status.

On the important issue of whether or not there should be fewer districts, 72.07 per cent of the higher educational group responded favorably, while only 49.00 per cent of the lower educational group were favorably inclined. However neither group opposed a reduction in the number of districts. The unusually high percentage of uncertain responses, 35.91, in the lower educational group appears important.

To the questions which dealt with the results to be expected from reorganization (8, 9, and 10), respondents in the higher educational group responded more favorably than did those in the lower educational group.

Of particular interest were the responses to Question 11, which treated the issue of having a single board or separate boards of education for the grade school and high school in a given district. It was stated earlier that the total responses to this item indicated that respondents preferred by a large majority separate boards of education for grade schools and high schools. The only group of respondents in the entire analysis to show a preference for a single board of education over separate boards was the group which had completed 12 or more years of school. This was the only group which held opinions on this issue which agree with leading educational thought. Upon further examination of the response to this item, it was evident that the lower educational group expressed more opposition to a single board of education than any other group of respondents used for purposes of this study. One is inclined to make the generalization that upon an issue of this kind, the factor of educational status is important in determining the opinions of the respondents.

Respondents in the lower educational class opposed the merger of the Champaign and Urbana school districts while those in the higher educational class favored it. Of the former group, only 29.55 per cent were for the merger while 60.61 per cent of the latter group favored it.

The factor of sex.--Percentage distributions of the responses by males and by females is presented in Table XXVIII. Perhaps the most obvious generalization which can be made from the data in this table is the fact that female respondents were more uncertain in their opinions than were male respondents. This was true for all of the items with no exceptions. It is evident that the percentage differences between the male and female "uncertain" responses were all significant statistically with but one exception in Question 8. It will be remembered that in the process of weighting the total sample response for unrepresentativeness of the sex ratio that every "uncertain" percentage was slightly decreased. It is difficult to say whether this indicates a greater lack of information on the part of females or a more forward attitude on the part of males to express opinion. One will note that even on an issue as controversial as the establishment of a single county unit district (Question 14) one-third of the female respondents were uncertain.

Of particular interest were the responses to Questions 1 and 15. On the important issue of reducing the number of school districts in Champaign County (Question 1) 71.37 per cent of the male respondents expressed a favorable

opinion while 52.26 per cent of the females responded similarly. On this important issue, nearly two-fifths (37.31 per cent) of the female respondents were uncertain. As can be observed from the table there was little difference between the percentages of males and females who directly opposed a reduction in the number of districts.

On the question of merging the Champaign and Urbana school districts (Question 15) 70.00 per cent of the male respondents expressed a favorable attitude while 41.43 per cent of the female respondents opposed the merger. Only 35.77 per cent of the females favored the combination of districts. Of further interest in the response to this question was the fact that no males were uncertain. The uncertain response to this issue among female respondents was somewhat surprising since a number of women had been actively campaigning for the merger and consequently many on-lookers felt that most women of the Twin Cities had rather definite opinions concerning the issue. In fact, many people thought that the women would favor the merger. The results of the opinion study, however, indicate that women opposed the merger and that nearly a fourth of them had no opinions about the issue. One can safely say then, that the opinions of those voters who are public leaders and active campaigners do not necessarily represent accurately the opinions of the entire electorate. This fact places added emphasis upon the need for dependable estimates of public opinion status.

The factor of economic status.--Classifying the replies according to the economic level of the respondent also revealed differences of opinion. This factor has been found to operate quite generally in the formation of public opinion on many social and economic issues. No breakdown of opinion data would seem complete without a consideration of the social or economic status of the respondents. Table XXIX reveals the opinions of the respondents classified according to economic level.

While both economic groups favored a reduction in the number of school districts in the county there was a more favorable attitude expressed by respondents in the upper level. Responses to Question 1 indicate that 72.07 per cent of the upper group were in favor while only 53.64 per cent of the lower group felt similarly. Considerable more uncertainty was found in the responses of the latter group; in fact one-third of this group had no definite opinion on the issue.

On the issue of control of school districts the higher economic group was more nearly in accord with leading educational thought than was the lower group. Responses to Question 11 indicate that 41.88 per cent of the upper group favored a single board while only 28.94 per cent of the lower group thought likewise. It should be noted, however, that both groups expressed a preference for separate boards of education.

The merger issue also found a clash of opinion among respondents of different economic status. Respondents in the upper bracket favored while those in the lower bracket opposed the combination of Champaign and Urbana school districts (Question 15).

The factor of school patronage.--Mention has already been made of the classification of the responses by school patronage groups. Those respondents who had children in school were designated as school patrons while those who did not have children in school were non-school patrons. Table XXX presents the responses according to this classification.

On the important issue of reducing the number of school districts in Champaign County (Question 1) 72.14 per cent of the patrons replied favorably while 56.85 per cent of the non-patrons indicated a similar preference.

School patrons were also better satisfied with the recommendations of the Survey Committee. To Question 5, 60.37 per cent expressed favorable responses while only 45.47 per cent of the non-patrons responded in this manner. The replies to Question 13 indicated that 58.13 per cent felt that the Committee's recommendation was the best plan for the county while 44.07 per cent of the non-patrons indicated a similar attitude.

The responses to Question 15, which considers the merger issue, suggest that there was more opposition to the merger among non-patrons than there was among patrons.

Although there were no direct contradictions of opinion on any of the items between patrons and non-patrons, it seems fair to generalize that the former usually responded more favorably on reorganization issues than did the latter. There was a tendency for non-patrons to be more uncertain in replying to the questions than were the patrons.

The factor of property ownership.--With the major burden of financial support for the schools in Illinois resting on the shoulders of property owners, it appeared significant to examine the opinions of this group compared with the opinions of non-property owners. This classification of responses is presented in Table XXXI.

Of particular interest in this breakdown was the issue which dealt with taxation, Question 9. To this question, which asked respondents if combining school districts would make possible a fairer distribution of the taxes, 56.68 per cent of the property owners said yes while 64.64 per cent of the non-property owners replied in the affirmative. As can be observed, this difference is not significant statistically.

There are very few generalizations which can be made from this breakdown. Perhaps the most important statement which can be made is that the classification of responses according to these groups resulted in no major clashes of opinion and only in a few instances did major differences of opinion exist.

### Interaction of Background Factors in Formation of Opinion

The analysis of data which has just been presented may create the impression that the various background factors--sex, age, educational status, and so on--are held to be independent elements in the process of opinion formation. Of course such is not the case. Various factors may influence the formation of opinion independently or in combination. However certain considerations in this study prohibited an analysis of this kind. In the course of this study, the size of the Champaign County sample was determined to a great extent by the practical question of securing sufficient manpower for interview work and by the time element involved in completing the report for the Survey Committee. Therefore no opportunity existed for an analysis of data in terms of determining the effect of the interaction of background factors in the formation of opinion. This kind of investigation presents an opportunity for further study.

### Summary of Opinion Response

Voters in Champaign County favored a reduction in the "present number of school districts." They believed that a reduction in the number of districts would make possible better schools, a fairer distribution in the tax burden and more economics in expenditures. They believed further that up-to-date programs of education can be offered most economically in grade schools with enrollments 100 and over and in high schools with enrollments 300 and over. Voters preferred separate boards of education for grade and high schools favored the use of advisory groups for boards of education. The establishment of a county-unit school district was definitely opposed. In general about half of the voters favored the recommendation of the Survey Committee of eight unit districts for the county.

In expressing opinions on issues pertaining to the reorganization of school districts in Champaign County, the following subgroups were, as a rule, more liberal in their views than were their counterparts: urban residents, younger age group, informed group, more educated group, the males, the upper economic class, and school patrons.

## Section V

## Summary and Conclusions

### Summary

The reorganization program underway in the State of Illinois places public opinion in a position of extreme importance. It occupies a place so important that educational leaders must have some dependable means of estimating its status if intelligent leadership is to be provided.

Section II of this study reported a demonstration of a technique for predicting the outcome of school district elections by sampling the opinions of all eligible registered voters by postal-card questionnaires. During the course of making the Clinton and Cerro Gordo predictions, three additional questions were included on the questionnaire form to explore the possibility that voters who voted favorably and unfavorably on the establishment of a new school district held different opinions on related reorganization issues. An analysis of the responses obtained from the Clinton and Cerro Gordo samples in Section III indicated that there were marked differences and that further study of this aspect of the problem was warranted.

A request for a survey of public opinion in Champaign County relative to reorganization problems afforded the opportunity for making a more intensive opinion study. A sample of voters in the county was polled by interviewers and the response was analyzed. The analysis indicated favorable opinions on the part of respondents on practically all of the issues studied. The responses were broken down by various background factors, and the significant differences between the various resulting subgroups were presented.

### Conclusions

1. It is possible, on the basis of the evidence given in Section II, to make a dependable prediction of the outcome of a school district election provided that (a) opinions of all eligible registered voters are sampled, (b) the response is obtained during the ten day period preceding the actual election, and (c) no major factors were introduced which would cause a sudden shift of opinion.

2. The predictive technique was more accurate in estimating the per cent of favorable votes to be cast in the election than it was in estimating the per cent of eligible voters who would come to the polls. One reason for this was the fact that one cannot place full confidence in a respondent's expressed intention of going to the polls. Actually, about three out of ten voted who said they intended to vote, while only one out of ten appeared at the polls when they had indicated that they probably would vote.

3. Evidence from the Clinton study suggested that those sample members who were most likely to go to the polls and vote were the people who returned their postal-card questionnaires. In fact, of the 177 sample members, only one appeared at the polls to vote who had not returned his questionnaire. The results obtained from the follow-up interviews also support this conclusion.

4. An analysis of the opinions held by Clinton and Cerro Gordo sample respondents on three related reorganization issues indicated that major differences of opinion existed between respondents who favored and those who opposed the establishment of a new school district. From this analysis it was determined that almost all voters who said they intended to vote "for" in the election also believed that a reorganized district would make possible better schools, a fairer distribution of the tax burden and more economies in expenditures. Generally speaking, the group of voters who expressed an intention of voting "against" in the election did not believe that reorganized districts made possible the results mentioned above. Voters who had no intention of voting in the election and those who would probably vote but not sure how were far more uncertain about what results reorganization would make possible.

5. Voters in Champaign County believed that there should be a reduction in the "present number of school districts." They were strongly opposed to the establishment of a single county unit school district. About half of the voters favored the eight district plan recommended in the Survey Committee's tentative report. A preference was expressed for separate boards of education for grade schools and high schools as opposed to a single board recommended by the Survey Committee and by the educators generally. Voters expressed a desire to have advisory councils for boards of education. Favorable opinion was expressed on the possibility of securing better schools, fairer tax distribution, and more economies through reorganized districts. Voters generally thought that modern programs of education could be offered most economically in high schools with enrollments over 300 and in grade schools with enrollments over 100. A majority in Champaign and Urbana expressed opinions favorable to the merger of the two city school districts.

6. When the response of the Champaign County respondents was broken down in terms of various background factors, the analysis indicated that the following subgroups were more liberal in their views about reorganization than were their counterparts: urban residents, younger age group, informed group, more educated group, males, upper economic group and school patrons.

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The reorganization movement in Illinois is underway and indications are that before too long there will be established in the state a sound organizational structure for education. The methods established by the legislature for bringing about these changes have brought school problems to the attention of the public mind such as has probably never been true before. Change brought about in a democratic society from grass-roots action has a way of being more enduring and more acceptable than change which is imposed from the top down.

The whole problem of reorganizing school districts in this state rests fundamentally upon the opinions and the attitudes of the people. The unselfish citizen who relizes the importance of education, not only for his own children but for others as well, and who has been properly informed concerning the present eeaknesses in the organizational structure of education, dare not look with apathy upon the improvements which reorganization offers. The point is, however, that far too many citizens do not fall within the categories just described. Far too many people have not thought about the issues involved. They have not seen wherein those issues are of concern to them. They openly admit that reorganization problems are no concern of theirs--"let the parents of school children worry about that!" When, as in Champaign County, as many as a third of the voters have no opinion about vital educational issues, and when as in the five elections studied, two-thirds of the voters never appear at the polls to vote on proposals to improve educational organization, one must say that a tremendous challenge is placed upon the school. The school must, if it adequately fulfills its purpose, actively engage in public-information activities such as it has never done before. It should be pointed out that this does not only mean increasing the amount of information distributed to the public.

Hyman and Sheatsley[42] in studying why information campaigns fail conclude:

"The above findings indicate clearly that those responsible for information campaigns cannot rely simply on 'increasing the flow' to spread their information effectively. The psychological barries we have pointed out create real problems for those charges with the task of informing the public, and in many cases public opinion surveys offer the only means by which these problems can be recognized, and thereby overcome.

"Surveys are already widely used to provide the information director with scientific knowledge of the quantitative distribution of his material. They can tell him how many people have been reached by his information, and more important, which particular groups have not been reached. Surveys, too, can quite easily measure public interest in information materials and areas, thus providing him with accurate knowledge of the handicaps his program faces within population groups.

"But on a different and higher level, surveys can inform the information director of the whole structure of attitudes on any public issue. They can tell him the major factors affecting public opinion on the issue, and the relative influence of these various factors in determining attitudes. They can tell to what extent information has reached the public and how far it has changed existing opinions. They can also tell what information is still needed and what aspects of it must be stressed in order to reach the unexposed or unsympathetic groups."

The school must maintain a constant awareness of what the public thinks about its policies, its program, its services, its proposed changes--in fact about everything it does. By so doing, the school is in a position to do better the job of education.

42. H. H. Hyman, and P. B. Sheatsley, "Some Reasons Why Information Campaigns Fail," Public Opinion Quarterly, XI (1947), p. 421.

TABLE I

NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS IN CLINTON COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION BY RURAL AND URBAN PRECINCTS

| Precincts | Number of Voters |
|---|---|
| Rural | |
| Texas Township | 183 |
| Harp Township and Dewitt Township (Excluding incorporated village of Dewitt) | 330 |
| Creek Township | 268 |
| Barnett Township | 229 |
| Clintonia Township (Excluding incorporated city of Clinton) | 283 |
| TOTAL RURAL | 1293 |
| Urban | |
| Dewitt | 96 |
| Clinton* | 4080 |
| TOTAL URBAN | 4176 |

*Although only one precinct for the special election was established in the city of Clinton, data were available for each of the eight city precincts in the general elections.

TABLE II

VOTING INTENTIONS OF CLINTON RURAL AND URBAN SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

| Response | Number of Sample Voters | |
|---|---|---|
| | Rural | Urban |
| "I intend to vote FOR" | 24 | 46 |
| "I intend to vote AGAINST" | 19 | 7 |
| "I probably will vote but uncertain how" | 12 | 23 |
| "I do not intend to vote" | 7 | 20 |
| TOTAL | 62 | 96 |

TABLE III

WEIGHTED FAVORABLE RESPONSES OF THE CLINTON RURAL SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

| Strata (Precincts) | Number Responses | | Percentage of "For" | Sample Quota* | Number of Weighted "For" |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | "For" | Total | | | |
| Texas | 5 | 5 | 100.0 | 13 | 13.0 |
| Harp-Dewitt | 5 | 15 | 33.3 | 24 | 8.0 |
| Creek | 4 | 8 | 50.0 | 19 | 9.5 |
| Barnett | 5 | 7 | 71.4 | 16 | 11.4 |
| Clintonia | 5 | 8 | 62.5 | 20 | 12.5 |
| TOTAL | 24 | 43 | 55.8 | 92 | 54.4 |

*Sample quotas were obtained by dividing the number of eligible voters in each stratum by 14. The ratio used in selecting the sample was 1/14.

TABLE IV

A COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGE OF FAVORABLE VOTES OBTAINED FROM SAMPLE RESPONSES AND THE PERCENTAGE OF FAVORABLE VOTES CAST IN THE CLINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION

| Election | Number of Votes Cast in Election | | Percentage of "For" Votes | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | "For" | Total | Election | Sample |
| Rural | 206 | 292 | 70.5 | 59.1* |
| Urban | 325 | 366 | 88.8 | 86.8 |

*Weighted percentage in terms of original sample strata quotas.

TABLE V

A COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGES OF "FOR" VOTES ON THE PROPOSED CLINTON DISTRICT CAST AT THE POLLS, OBTAINED FROM THE ENTIRE RESPONSE, AND OBTAINED FROM ONLY THE MAIL RESPONSE

| Class of Voter | Percent of "For" Votes | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Election | Entire Response | Mail Response |
| Rural | 70.5 | 59.1* | 62.4* |
| Urban | 88.8 | 86.8 | 87.5 |

*Percentages weighted in terms of original sample strata quotas.

TABLE VI

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSE OF THE CLINTON RURAL AND URBAN SAMPLES IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS WHO ACTUALLY VOTED AT THE POLLS

| Response | Rural Sample | | | Urban Sample | | | Total | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | Actually Voted | % | No. | Actually Voted | % | No. | Actually Voted | % |
| "Intend to Vote" (For or Against) | 43 | 19 | 44.2 | 53 | 15 | 28.3 | 96 | 34 | 35.4 |
| "Probably will Vote" | 12 | 3 | 25.0 | 23 | 1 | 4.3 | 35 | 4 | 11.4 |
| "Do Not Intend to Vote" | 7 | 0 | 0.0 | 20 | 0 | 0.0 | 27 | 0 | 0.0 |
| TOTAL | 62 | 22 | 35.5 | 96 | 16 | 16.7 | 158 | 38 | 24.0 |

TABLE VII

NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS IN THE CERRO GORDO COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION BY RURAL AND URBAN PRECINCTS

| Precincts | Number of Eligible Voters | |
|---|---|---|
| Rural | | |
| Flory | 174 | |
| LaPlace | 150 | |
| Oakley | 419 | |
| Ridge | 180 | |
| RURAL TOTAL | | 923 |
| Urban | | |
| Cerro Gordo | | 624 |

TABLE VIII

VOTING INTENTIONS OF CERRO GORDO RURAL AND URBAN SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

| Response | Number of Sample Voters | |
|---|---|---|
| | Rural | Urban |
| "I intend to vote FOR" | 54 | 46 |
| "I intend to vote AGAINST" | 18 | 3 |
| "I probably will vote but uncertain how" | 22 | 11 |
| "I do not intend to vote" | 6 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 63 |

TABLE IX

FAVORABLE RESPONSES OF THE CERRO GORDO RURAL SAMPLE WEIGHTED IN TERMS OF ORIGINAL SAMPLE STRATA QUOTAS

| Strata (Precincts) | Number Responses | | Percentage of "For" Responses | Sample Quotas* | Number of Weighted "For" Resp. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | "For" | Total | | | |
| Flory | 15 | 17 | 88.2 | 29 | 25.6 |
| LaPlace | 12 | 12 | 100.0 | 25 | 22.0 |
| Oakley | 22 | 34 | 64.7 | 69 | 44.6 |
| Ridge | 5 | 9 | 55.6 | 30 | 16.7 |
| TOTAL | 54 | 72 | 75.0 | 153 | 103.9 |

*Sample quotas for each precinct were obtained by dividing the number of eligible voters by 6. The ratio used in selecting the sample was 1/6.

TABLE X

A COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGE OF FAVORABLE VOTES OBTAINED FROM THE SAMPLE RESPONSE AND THE PERCENTAGE OF FAVORABLE VOTES CAST IN THE CERRO GORDO SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION

| Election | Number of Votes Cast in Election | | Percentage of "For" Votes | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | "For" | Total | Election | Sample |
| Rural | 118 | 176 | 67.0 | 71.2* |
| Urban | 52 | 57 | 93.9 | 91.2 |

*Weighted percentage in terms of original sample quotas.

TABLE XI

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CERRO GORDO RURAL AND URBAN SAMPLE RESPONSE IN TERMS OF THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS WHO VOTED IN THE ELECTION

| Election | % of Eligible Voters Voting | |
|---|---|---|
| | In Election | Sample Predict. |
| Rural | 19.3 | 27.6 |
| Urban | 8.9 | 17.7 |

TABLE XII

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSE OF THE CERRO GORDO RURAL AND URBAN SAMPLE RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS WHO WHO ACTUALLY VOTED AT THE POLLS

| Response | Rural Sample | | | Urban Sample | | | Total | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | Actually Voted | % | No. | Actually Voted | % | No. | Actually Voted | % |
| "Intend to Vote" (For or Against) | 72 | 19 | 26.4 | 49 | 8 | 16.3 | 121 | 27 | 22.3 |
| "Probably will vote" | 22 | 2 | 9.1 | 11 | 0 | 0.0 | 33 | 2 | 6.1 |
| "Do not intend to vote" | 6 | 0 | 0.0 | 3 | 0 | 0.0 | 9 | 0 | 0.0 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 21 | 21.0 | 63 | 8 | 12.7 | 163 | 29 | 17.8 |

TABLE XIII

RESPONSE, BY SAMPLE GROUP, OF THE CLINTON AND CERRO GORDO SAMPLES TO THE QUESTION: "IN YOUR OPINION DOES COMBINING SCHOOL DISTRICTS MAKE POSSIBLE BETTER SCHOOLS?"

| Sample Group in Prediction Study | Percent responding "Yes" to Question | | Percent responding "No" to Question | | Percent responding "Uncertain" to Question | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Clinton | Cerro Gordo | Clinton | Cerro Gordo | Clinton | Cerro Gordo |
| Expressed intent to vote "For" new school district | 96 | 95 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| Expressed intent to vote "Against" new school district | 12 | 15 | 64 | 57 | 24 | 28 |
| Said "Probably will vote but uncertain how" | 27 | 48 | 6 | 6 | 67 | 46 |
| Expressed no intent of voting | 32 | 33 | 9 | 11 | 59 | 56 |

TABLE XIV

RESPONSE, BY SAMPLE GROUP, OF THE CLINTON AND CERRO GORDO SAMPLES TO THE QUESTION: "IN YOUR OPINION DOES COMBINING SCHOOL DISTRICTS MAKE POSSIBLE A FAIRER DISTRIBUTION OF THE TAX BURDEN?"

| Sample Group in Prediction Study | Percent Responding "Yes" to Question | | Percent Responding "No" to Question | | Percent Responding "Uncertain" to Question | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Clinton | Cerro Gordo | Clinton | Cerro Gordo | Clinton | Cerro Gordo |
| Expressed intent to vote "For" new school district | 70 | 85 | 4 | 2 | 26 | 13 |
| Expressed intent to vote "Against" new school district | 16 | 24 | 60 | 62 | 24 | 14 |
| Said "Probably will vote but uncertain how" | 12 | 39 | 12 | 3 | 76 | 58 |
| Expressed no intent of voting | 10 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 90 | 78 |

TABLE XV

RESPONSE, BY SAMPLE GROUP, OF THE CLINTON AND CERRO GORDO SAMPLES TO THE QUESTION: "IN YOUR OPINION DOES COMBINING SCHOOL DISTRICTS MAKE POSSIBLE MORE ECONOMIES IN EXPENDITURES?"

| Sample Group in Prediction Study | Percent Responding "Yes" to Question | | Percent Responding "No" to Question | | Percent Responding "Uncertain" to Question | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Clinton | Cerro Gordo | Clinton | Cerro Gordo | Clinton | Cerro Gordo |
| Expressed intent to vote "For" new school district | 74 | 76 | 4 | 4 | 22 | 20 |
| Expressed intent to vote "Against" new school district | 0 | 14 | 80 | 76 | 20 | 10 |
| Said "Probably will vote but uncertain how" | 24 | 33 | 12 | 15 | 64 | 52 |
| Expressed no intent of voting | 23 | 11 | 4 | 0 | 73 | 89 |

TABLE XVI

DISTRIBUTION OF 302 CASES FOR CHAMPAIGN COUNTY OPINION SURVEY BY GEOGRAPHIC REGION AND BY RURAL-URBAN SPLIT--PRELIMINARY QUOTAS

| Geographical Region of Precincts | Quotas | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural Subsample | Urban Subsamples | | Total |
| | | Other than Twin Cities | Twin Cities | |
| Northern | 32 | 33 | 0 | 65 |
| Central | 43 | 19 | 0 | 62 |
| Southern | 38 | 21 | 0 | 59 |
| Twin Cities | 0 | 0 | 116 | 116 |
| TOTAL | 113 | 73 | 116 | 302 |

TABLE XVII

A COMPARISON OF SAMPLE QUOTAS AND NUMBER OF CASES ACTUALLY DRAWN IN SAMPLE AND SUB-SAMPLES FOR CHAMPAIGN COUNTY OPINION POLL

| Subsample | Number of Sample Cases | |
|---|---|---|
| | Quota | Actually drawn |
| Rural | 113 | 114 |
| Urban (Excluding Twin Cities) | 73 | 69 |
| Twin Cities | 116 | 110 |
| TOTAL | 302 | 293 |

TABLE XVIII

A COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF USABLE INTERVIEW SCHEDULES WITH THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF SAMPLE CASES SELECTED FOR THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY OPINION POLL

| Subsample | Number of Sample Cases Selected | Number of Usable Schedules |
|---|---|---|
| Rural | 114 | 112 |
| Urban (Excluding Twin Cities) | 69 | 65 |
| Twin Cities | 110 | 110 |
| TOTAL | 293 | 287 |

TABLE XIX

COMPARISON OF BACKGROUND FACTORS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE POPULATION OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY AS DISTRIBUTED IN THE COUNTY AND IN THE SAMPLE STUDIED

| Background Factor | Population of Voting Age in Champaign County | Per Cent of Population of Voting Age | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | In County | In Sample Studied[a] |
| RACE[b] | | | |
| Negro | 1,384 | 3.0 | 3.7 |
| White | 45,275 | 97.0 | 96.3 |
| Total | 46,659 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| AGE[b] | | | |
| 21-29 years[c] | 12,472 | 26.7 | 17.1 |
| 30-39 years | 10,084 | 21.6 | 23.2 |
| 40-49 years | 8,721 | 18.7 | 19.3 |
| 50-59 years | 7,234 | 15.5 | 17.7 |
| 60-69 years | 4,835 | 10.4 | 14.9 |
| 70 and over | 3,214 | 6.9 | 7.9 |
| Not reported | 99 | 0.2 | 0.0 |
| Total | 46,659 | 100.0 | 100.1 |
| SEX[b] | | | |
| Male | 23,648 | 50.7 | 44.8 |
| Female | 23,011 | 49.3 | 55.2 |
| Total | 46,659 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT[d] | | | |
| Completed 0-6 grades | 4,363 | 10.8 | 11.6 |
| " 7-11 " | 20,869 | 51.8 | 37.1 |
| " 12 " | 7,368 | 18.3 | 21.1 |
| " 13-15 " | 3,069 | 7.6 | 12.8 |
| " 16 " | 4,261 | 10.6 | 17.3 |
| No Report | 379 | 0.9 | 0.0 |
| Total | 40,299 | 100.0 | 99.9 |

a Weighted percentages

b Data obtained from National Census, 1940.

c Age groupings in interview schedule did not exactly coincide with census classifications. Age brackets used on interview schedule were: 21-30; 31-40; 41-50; 51-60; 61-70; over 70.

d Census report included data on only those persons over 25 years of age.

TABLE XX

COMPARISON OF THE PER CENT OF VOTERS IN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY ATTENDING THE PUBLIC HEARINGS AS OBTAINED FROM SAMPLE RESULTS AND AS OBTAINED FROM ATTENDANCE ESTIMATE

| Group | Population of Voting Age in Champaign County | % Population of Voting Age | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Attendance Estimate | Sample Response |
| Attended hearings | 1,900 | 4.1 | 6.7 |
| Did not attend hearings | 44,759 | 95.9 | 93.3 |
| TOTAL | 46,659 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

TABLE XXI

A COMPARISON OF THE FAVORABLE RESPONSE OBTAINED FROM THE TWIN CITIES SUBSAMPLE WITH THE FAVORABLE VOTES CAST IN THE ELECTION ON THE MERGER QUESTION

| Group of Voter | Per Cent | |
|---|---|---|
| | In Subsample[a] | In Election |
| Favored merger | 56.5 | 58.8 |
| Opposed merger | 43.5 | 41.2 |
| TOTAL | 100.0 | 100.0 |

a Percentages were determined from only those who held opinions on the issue. It will be remembered that this method was used in making the Clinton and Cerro Gordo predictions.

TABLE XXII

SUMMARY OF THE ENTIRE SAMPLE RESPONSE TO THE OPINION QUESTIONS OF THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

| Question and Response | Per Cent of Sample Responding |
|---|---|
| 1. Number of school districts for Champaign County | |
| a. Fewer than present number | 60.8 |
| b. Same as present number | 11.2 |
| c. Uncertain | 27.9 |
| 5.* Attitude toward new proposed district in which respondent has been has been tentatively located | |
| a. Satisfied | 49.3 |
| b. Partly or wholly dissatisfied | 24.2 |
| c. Uncertain | 26.4 |
| 6. Size of high school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | |
| a. Enrollment 300 and over | 67.2 |
| b. Enrollment under 300 | 17.3 |
| c. Uncertain | 15.6 |
| 7. Size of grade school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | |
| a. Enrollment 100 and over | 73.5 |
| b. Enrollment under 100 | 8.4 |
| c. Uncertain | 18.2 |
| 8. Better schools possible by combining school districts? | |
| a. Yes | 71.3 |
| b. No | 17.1 |
| c. Uncertain | 11.6 |
| 9. Fairer distributions of taxes possible by combining school districts? | |
| a. Yes | 59.2 |
| b. No | 15.6 |
| c. Uncertain | 25.2 |
| 10. More economies possible by combining school districts? | |
| a. Yes | 65.5 |
| b. No | 15.9 |
| c. Uncertain | 18.6 |

TABLE XXII (Continued)

| Question and Response | Per Cent of Sample Responding |
|---|---|
| 11. Single board or separate boards of education for grade school and high school? | |
| a. Single board | 34.0 |
| b. Separate boards | 58.5 |
| c. Uncertain | 7.5 |
| 12. Advisory council for school boards? | |
| a. Favor | 66.3 |
| b. Oppose | 22.2 |
| c. Uncertain | 11.6 |
| 13. Eight district recommendation best plan for this county? | |
| a. Yes | 48.2 |
| b. No | 20.4 |
| c. Uncertain | 31.4 |
| 14. A single county unit district for this county? | |
| a. Favor | 11.6 |
| b. Oppose | 64.4 |
| c. Uncertain | 24.0 |
| 15.**Merging Champaign and Urbana school districts | |
| a. Favor | 48.2 |
| b. Oppose | 37.3 |
| c. Uncertain | 14.6 |

* Questions 2, 3, and 4 were not opinion questions and are therefore omitted.
**Data for Question 15 obtained from the Champaign-Urbana urban subsample.

TABLE XXIII

RELIABILITY OF RESPONSES TO OPINION QUESTIONS ON INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

| Question | Favorable (or "a") Responses | | Interval Estimate in Per Cents* Confidence Coefficient .95 | Difference Between Upper & Lower Limits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Per Cent | Standard Error of Per Cent | | |
| 1 | 60.82 | 2.88 | 55.18-66.46 | 11.28 |
| 5** | 49.34 | 2.95 | 43.56-55.12 | 11.56 |
| 6 | 67.18 | 2.77 | 61.75-72.61 | 10.86 |
| 7 | 73.48 | 2.61 | 68.36-78.60 | 10.24 |
| 8 | 71.30 | 2.67 | 66.07-76.53 | 10.46 |
| 9 | 59.17 | 2.90 | 53.49-64.85 | 11.36 |
| 10 | 65.50 | 2.81 | 59.99-71.01 | 11.02 |
| 11 | 34.00 | 2.80 | 28.51-39.49 | 10.98 |
| 12 | 66.26 | 2.79 | 60.79-71.73 | 10.94 |
| 13 | 48.15 | 2.95 | 42.37-53.93 | 11.56 |
| 14 | 11.59 | 1.89 | 7.89-15.29 | 7.40 |
| 15 | 48.17 | 4.76 | 38.83-57.51 | 18.68 |

* The figures in this column were obtained by adding 1.96 $\sigma$ to the percentage and subtracting 1.96 $\sigma$ from the percentage. In the normal curve, 95 per cent of the cases lie between 1.96 $\sigma$ above the mean and 1.96 $\sigma$ below the mean.

** Questions 2, 3, and 4 were not opinion items and therefore are omitted.

TABLE XXIV

RESPONSES TO OPINION QUESTIONS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO RESIDENCE OF RESPONDENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PERCENTAGES

| Question and Response | Per Cent Responding | | Difference | Standard Error | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural | Urban | $P_1 - P_2$ | $P_1 - P_2$ | |
| 1. Number of school districts in Champaign County | | | | | |
| a. Fewer than present number | 62.50 | 60.32 | 2.18 | 5.88 | .37 |
| b. Same as present number | 16.96 | 9.53 | 7.43 | 3.18 | 2.34* |
| c. Uncertain | 20.54 | 30.14 | -9.60 | 5.16 | 1.86 |
| 5.[a] Attitude toward new proposed district in which respondent has been tentatively located | | | | | |
| a. Satisfied | 42.86 | 51.29 | -8.43 | 6.01 | 1.40 |
| b. Partly or wholly dissatisfied | 44.64 | 18.05 | 26.59 | 5.52 | 4.82** |
| c. Uncertain | 12.50 | 30.66 | -18.16 | 4.68 | 3.88** |
| 6. Size of high school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 300 and over | 52.68 | 71.55 | -18.87 | 5.82 | 3.24** |
| b. Enrollment under 300 | 33.03 | 12.55 | 20.48 | 5.10 | 4.02** |
| c. Uncertain | 14.29 | 15.90 | -1.61 | 4.31 | .37 |
| 7. Size of grade school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 100 and over | 66.08 | 75.72 | -9.64 | 5.52 | 1.75 |
| b. Enrollment under 100 | 21.43 | 4.40 | 17.03 | 4.18 | 4.07** |
| c. Uncertain | 12.50 | 19.88 | -7.38 | 4.34 | 1.70 |
| 8. Better schools possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 69.65 | 71.81 | -2.16 | 5.52 | .39 |
| b. No | 19.65 | 16.32 | 3.33 | 4.68 | .71 |
| c. Uncertain | 10.71 | 11.88 | -1.17 | 3.81 | .31 |

TABLE XXIV (Continued)

| Question and Response | Per Cent Responding | | Difference | Standard Error | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rural | Urban | $p_1 - p_2$ | $p_1 - p_2$ | |
| 9. Fairer distribution of taxes possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 50.90 | 61.67 | -10.77 | 5.99 | 1.80 |
| b. No | 25.00 | 12.76 | 12.24 | 4.81 | 2.54* |
| c. Uncertain | 24.11 | 25.58 | -1.47 | 5.22 | .28 |
| 10. More economies possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 50.89 | 69.92 | -19.03 | 5.86 | 3.25** |
| b. No | 30.36 | 11.55 | 18.81 | 4.97 | 3.78** |
| c. Uncertain | 18.75 | 18.52 | .23 | 4.71 | .05 |
| 11. Single board or separate boards of education for grade school and high school? | | | | | |
| a. Single board | 22.32 | 37.53 | -15.21 | 5.37 | 2.83** |
| b. Separate boards | 68.75 | 55.41 | 13.34 | 5.77 | 2.31* |
| c. Uncertain | 8.93 | 7.06 | 1.87 | 3.32 | .56 |
| 12. Advisory council for school boards? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 66.07 | 66.32 | - .25 | 5.73 | .04 |
| b. Oppose | 24.11 | 21.61 | 2.50 | 5.10 | .49 |
| c. Uncertain | 9.82 | 12.07 | -2.25 | 3.74 | .60 |
| 13. Eight district recommendation best plan for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 41.97 | 50.01 | -8.04 | 6.00 | 1.34 |
| b. No | 31.25 | 17.18 | 14.07 | 5.23 | 2.69** |
| c. Uncertain | 26.79 | 32.81 | -6.02 | 5.49 | 1.10 |
| 14. A single county unit district for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 2.68 | 14.29 | -11.61 | 3.05 | 3.81** |
| b. Oppose | 83.03 | 58.74 | 24.29 | 5.14 | 4.73** |
| c. Uncertain | 14.29 | 26.97 | -12.68 | 4.71 | 2.69** |
| 15.[b] Merging Champaign and Urbana school districts | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 16.99 | 48.18 | -31.19 | 5.54 | 5.63** |
| b. Oppose | 38.77 | 37.28 | 1.49 | 5.89 | .25 |
| c. Uncertain | 44.24 | 14.55 | 29.69 | 5.02 | 5.91** |

a Questions 2, 3, and 4 omitted since they were not opinion items.

b Represents response of the Champaign-Urbana subsample compared with the response of the remainder of the sample.

* t significant at the .05 level

**t significant at the .01 level

TABLE XXV

RESPONSES TO OPINION QUESTIONS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE AGE GROUP OF RESPONDENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERCENTAGES

| Question and Response | Per Cent Responding | | Difference | Standard Error | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 21 - 40 years | Over 40 years | $p_1 - p_2$ | $p_1 - p_2$ | t* |
| 1. Number of school districts in Champaign County | | | | | |
| a. Fewer than present number | 65.03 | 57.98 | 7.05 | 4.89 | 1.44 |
| b. Same as present number | 9.99 | 12.13 | -2.14 | 3.74 | .57 |
| c. Uncertain | 24.98 | 29.88 | -4.90 | 5.34 | .92 |
| 5.[a] Attitude toward new proposed district in which respondent has been tentatively located | | | | | |
| a. Satisfied | 56.65 | 44.41 | 12.24 | 5.98 | 2.05* |
| b. Partly or wholly dissatisfied | 22.31 | 25.54 | -3.23 | 5.11 | .63 |
| c. Uncertain | 21.05 | 30.05 | -9.00 | 5.16 | 1.74 |
| 6. Size of high school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 300 and over | 77.15 | 60.19 | 16.96 | 5.41 | 3.13** |
| b. Enrollment under 300 | 13.56 | 19.72 | -6.16 | 4.40 | 1.40 |
| c. Uncertain | 9.30 | 20.09 | -10.79 | 4.08 | 2.64** |
| 7. Size of grade school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 100 and over | 89.83 | 64.18 | 25.65 | 4.62 | 5.55** |
| b. Enrollment under 100 | 4.67 | 9.11 | -4.44 | 2.93 | 1.52 |
| c. Uncertain | 5.49 | 26.70 | -21.21 | 3.99 | 5.32** |
| 8. Better schools possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 77.72 | 36.96 | 10.76 | 5.28 | 2.04* |
| b. No | 14.38 | 18.91 | -4.53 | 4.43 | 1.02 |
| c. Uncertain | 7.90 | 14.12 | -6.22 | 3.66 | 1.70 |

TABLE XXV (Continued)

| Question and Response | Per Cent Responding | | Difference | Standard Error | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 21 - 40 years | Over 40 years | $p_1 - p_2$ | $p_1 - p_2$ | |
| 9. Fairer distribution of taxes possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 67.04 | 53.83 | 13.21 | 5.80 | 2.28* |
| b. No | 12.05 | 18.00 | -5.95 | 4.22 | 1.41 |
| c. Uncertain | 20.91 | 28.17 | -7.26 | 5.10 | 1.42 |
| 10. More economies possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 75.09 | 58.99 | 16.10 | 5.51 | 2.92** |
| b. No | 9.21 | 20.49 | -11.28 | 4.09 | 2.76** |
| c. Uncertain | 15.70 | 20.52 | -4.82 | 4.58 | 1.05 |
| 11. Single board or separate boards of education for grade school and high school? | | | | | |
| a. Single board | 40.76 | 29.41 | 11.35 | 5.75 | 1.97* |
| b. Separate boards | 54.67 | 61.12 | -6.45 | 5.95 | 1.08 |
| c. Uncertain | 4.57 | 9.47 | -4.90 | 2.96 | 1.66 |
| 12. Advisory council for school boards? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 69.26 | 64.24 | 5.02 | 5.65 | .89 |
| b. Oppose | 21.96 | 22.35 | -.39 | 4.99 | .08 |
| c. Uncertain | 8.78 | 13.41 | -4.63 | 3.70 | 1.25 |
| 13. Eight district recommendation best plan for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 56.76 | 42.32 | 14.44 | 5.96 | 2.42** |
| b. No | 13.05 | 25.45 | -12.40 | 4.57 | 2.71** |
| c. Uncertain | 30.19 | 32.23 | -2.04 | 5.57 | .37 |
| 14. A single county unit district for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 15.32 | 9.05 | 6.27 | 4.01 | 1.56 |
| b. Oppose | 59.54 | 67.71 | -8.17 | 5.80 | 1.41 |
| c. Uncertain | 25.14 | 23.24 | 1.90 | 5.17 | .37 |
| 15.[b] Merging Champaign and Urbana school districts | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 62.22 | 38.46 | 23.76 | 9.42 | 2.52** |
| b. Oppose | 28.89 | 43.08 | -14.19 | 9.13 | 1.55 |
| c. Uncertain | 8.89 | 18.46 | -9.57 | 6.42 | 1.49 |

a Questions 2, 3, and 4 omitted since they were not opinion items.
b Represents response of the Champaign-Urbana subsample.
* t significant at the .05 level
** t significant at the .01 level

TABLE XXVI

RESPONSES TO OPINION QUESTIONS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE INFORMATIONAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERCENTAGES

| Question and Response | Percent Responding | | Difference $p_1 - p_2$ | Standard Error $p_1 - p_2$ | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Informed | Uninformed | | | |
| 1. Number of school districts in Champaign County | | | | | |
| a. Fewer than present number | 67.50 | 47.08 | 20.42 | 6.19 | 3.30** |
| b. Same as present number | 11.40 | 11.01 | .39 | 3.98 | .10 |
| c. Uncertain | 21.11 | 41.91 | -20.80 | 5.92 | 3.51** |
| 5.[a] Attitude toward new proposed district in which respondent has been tentatively located | | | | | |
| a. Satisfied | 48.42 | 51.23 | -2.81 | 6.32 | .44 |
| b. Partly or wholly dissatisfied | 28.36 | 15.76 | 12.60 | 4.98 | 2.53** |
| c. Uncertain | 23.22 | 33.01 | -9.49 | 5.54 | 1.77 |
| 6. Size of high school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 300 and over | 68.62 | 63.76 | 4.86 | 6.01 | .81 |
| b. Enrollment under 300 | 19.47 | 12.63 | 6.84 | 4.48 | 1.53 |
| c. Uncertain | 11.92 | 23.61 | -11.69 | 5.00 | 2.34* |
| 7. Size of grade school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 100 and over | 76.38 | 67.51 | 8.87 | 5.75 | 1.54 |
| b. Enrollment under 100 | 9.09 | 6.86 | 2.23 | 3.34 | .67 |
| c. Uncertain | 14.52 | 25.63 | -11.11 | 5.20 | 2.14* |
| 8. Better schools possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 76.00 | 61.64 | 14.36 | 5.92 | 2.43* |
| b. No | 14.69 | 22.02 | -7.33 | 5.01 | 1.46 |
| c. Uncertain | 9.32 | 16.33 | -7.01 | 4.38 | 1.60 |

TABLE XXVI (Continued)

| Question and Response | Percent Responding | | Difference $p_1 - p_2$ | Standard Error $p_1 - p_2$ | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | In-formed | Unin-formed | | | |
| 9. Fairer distribution of taxes possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 61.63 | 54.05 | 7.58 | 6.25 | 1.21 |
| b. No | 15.37 | 16.09 | - .72 | 4.62 | .16 |
| c. Uncertain | 23.00 | 29.85 | -6.85 | 5.64 | 1.21 |
| 10. More economies possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 68.51 | 59.24 | 9.27 | 6.11 | 1.52 |
| b. No | 16.84 | 14.09 | 2.75 | 4.51 | .61 |
| c. Uncertain | 14.65 | 26.66 | -12.01 | 5.16 | 2.33* |
| 11. Single board or separate boards of education for grade school and high school? | | | | | |
| a. Single board | 35.20 | 31.50 | 3.70 | 5.93 | .62 |
| b. Separate boards | 57.98 | 59.62 | -1.64 | 6.22 | .26 |
| c. Uncertain | 6.83 | 8.88 | -2.05 | 3.47 | .59 |
| 12. Advisory council for school boards? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 65.57 | 67.69 | -2.12 | 5.89 | .36 |
| b. Oppose | 26.21 | 13.92 | 12.29 | 4.79 | 2.57* |
| c. Uncertain | 8.22 | 18.39 | -10.17 | 4.92 | 2.07* |
| 13. Eight district recommendation best plan for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 50.26 | 43.77 | 6.49 | 6.29 | 1.03 |
| b. No | 21.91 | 17.47 | 4.44 | 4.94 | .90 |
| c. Uncertain | 27.83 | 38.76 | -10.93 | 6.01 | 1.82 |
| 14. A single county unit district for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 12.56 | 9.56 | 3.00 | 3.94 | .76 |
| b. Oppose | 66.08 | 60.99 | 5.09 | 6.11 | .83 |
| c. Uncertain | 21.36 | 29.46 | -8.10 | 5.59 | 1.45 |
| 15.[b] Merging Champaign and Urbana school districts | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 54.79 | 35.14 | 19.65 | 9.77 | 2.01* |
| b. Oppose | 30.14 | 51.35 | -21.21 | 9.81 | 2.16* |
| c. Uncertain | 15.07 | 13.51 | 1.56 | 7.01 | .22 |

a Questions 2, 3, and 4 omitted since they were not opinion items.
b Represents responses of the Champaign-Urbana subsample.
* t significant at the .05 level.
** t significant at the .01 level.

TABLE XXVII

RESPONSES TO OPINION QUESTIONS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY RESPONDENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PERCENTAGES

| Question and Response | Percent Responding by Years Completed | | Difference $p_1 - p_2$ | Standard Error $p_1 - p_2$ | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 - 11 years | 12 or more yrs. | | | |
| 1. Number of school districts in Champaign County | | | | | |
| a. Fewer than present number | 49.00 | 72.07 | -23.07 | 5.60 | 4.12** |
| b. Same as present number | 15.09 | 7.64 | 7.45 | 3.69 | 2.02* |
| c. Uncertain | 35.91 | 20.29 | 15.62 | 4.34 | 3.60** |
| 5.[a] Attitude toward new proposed district in which respondent has been tentatively located | | | | | |
| a. Satisfied | 48.50 | 50.14 | -1.64 | 5.90 | .28 |
| b. Partly or wholly dissatisfied | 28.21 | 20.46 | 7.75 | 5.04 | 1.54 |
| c. Uncertain | 23.28 | 29.40 | -6.12 | 4.83 | 1.27 |
| 6. Size of high school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 300 and over | 58.61 | 75.04 | -16.43 | 5.46 | 3.01** |
| b. Enrollment under 300 | 25.01 | 9.83 | 15.18 | 4.33 | 3.51** |
| c. Uncertain | 16.37 | 15.13 | 1.24 | 4.30 | .29 |
| 7. Size of grade school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 100 and over | 71.70 | 75.18 | -3.48 | 4.49 | .78 |
| b. Enrollment under 100 | 12.01 | 4.89 | 7.12 | 3.21 | 2.22* |
| c. Uncertain | 16.29 | 19.93 | -3.64 | 4.54 | .80 |
| 8. Better schools possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 57.27 | 84.64 | -27.37 | 5.06 | 5.41** |
| b. No | 25.74 | 8.85 | 16.89 | 4.29 | 3.94** |
| c. Uncertain | 16.99 | 6.50 | 10.49 | 3.70 | 2.84** |
| 9. Fairer distribution of taxes possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 47.09 | 70.63 | -23.54 | 5.64 | 4.17** |
| b. No | 23.44 | 8.15 | 15.29 | 4.15 | 3.68** |
| c. Uncertain | 29.47 | 21.22 | 8.25 | 5.11 | 1.61 |

TABLE XXVII (Continued)

| Questions and Response | Percent Responding by Years Completed | | Difference $P_1 - P_2$ | Standard Error $P_1 - P_2$ | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 - 11 years | 12 or more yrs. | | | |
| 10. More economies possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 58.55 | 72.07 | -13.52 | 5.56 | 2.43* |
| b. No | 21.72 | 10.44 | 11.28 | 4.25 | 2.65** |
| c. Uncertain | 19.73 | 17.48 | 2.25 | 4.59 | .49 |
| 11. Single board or separate boards of education for grade school and high School? | | | | | |
| a. Single board | 18.82 | 48.41 | -29.59 | 5.37 | 5.51** |
| b. Separate boards | 74.96 | 42.88 | 32.08 | 5.54 | 5.79** |
| c. Uncertain | 6.22 | 8.71 | -2.49 | 3.10 | .80 |
| 12. Advisory council for school boards? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 64.02 | 68.40 | -4.38 | 5.58 | .78 |
| b. Oppose | 24.94 | 19.57 | 5.37 | 4.90 | 1.10 |
| c. Uncertain | 11.04 | 12.02 | - .98 | 3.77 | .26 |
| 13. Eight district recommendations best plan for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 40.78 | 55.14 | -14.36 | 5.86 | 2.45* |
| b. No | 29.87 | 11.50 | 18.37 | 4.60 | 3.99** |
| c. Uncertain | 29.34 | 33.36 | -4.02 | 5.47 | .73 |
| 14. A single county unit district for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 11.97 | 11.21 | .76 | 3.78 | .20 |
| b. Oppose | 66.00 | 62.90 | 3.10 | 5.65 | .55 |
| c. Uncertain | 22.03 | 25.88 | -3.85 | 5.03 | .77 |
| 15.[b] Merging Champaign and Urbana school districts | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 29.55 | 60.61 | -31.06 | 9.14 | 3.40** |
| b. Oppose | 47.73 | 30.30 | 17.43 | 9.42 | 1.80 |
| c. Uncertain | 22.73 | 9.09 | 13.64 | 7.24 | 1.88 |

a Questions 2, 3, and 4 are omitted since they were not opinion items.
b Represents response of the Champaign-Urbana subsample.
* t significant at the .05 level.
** t significant at the .01 level.

TABLE XXVIII

RESPONSES TO OPINION QUESTIONS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO SEX OF THE RESPONDENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PERCENTAGES

| Question and Response | Percent Responding | | Difference | Standard Error | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | $p_1 - p_2$ | $p_1 - p_2$ | |
| 1. Number of school districts in Champaign County | | | | | |
| a. Fewer than present number | 71.37 | 52.26 | 19.11 | 4.20 | 4.55** |
| b. Same as present number | 12.30 | 10.43 | 1.87 | 3.74 | .50 |
| c. Uncertain | 16.32 | 37.31 | -20.99 | 5.08 | 4.13** |
| 5.[a] Attitude toward new proposed district in which respondent has been tentatively located | | | | | |
| a. Satisfied | 53.28 | 46.14 | 7.14 | 5.89 | 1.21 |
| b. Partly or wholly dissatisfied | 29.35 | 20.09 | 9.26 | 5.06 | 1.83 |
| c. Uncertain | 17.37 | 33.76 | -16.39 | 5.06 | 3.24** |
| 6. Size of high school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 300 and over | 72.45 | 62.63 | 9.83 | 5.50 | 1.79 |
| b. Enrollment under 300 | 19.09 | 15.73 | 3.36 | 4.47 | .75 |
| c. Uncertain | 8.45 | 21.65 | -13.20 | 4.15 | 3.18** |
| 7. Size of grade school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 100 and over | 83.56 | 65.30 | 18.26 | 5.04 | 3.62** |
| b. Enrollment under 100 | 7.02 | 9.45 | -2.43 | 3.24 | .75 |
| c. Uncertain | 9.41 | 25.25 | -15.84 | 4.37 | 3.62** |
| 8. Better schools possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 75.29 | 68.06 | 7.23 | 5.30 | 1.36 |
| b. No | 15.55 | 18.33 | -2.78 | 4.42 | .63 |
| c. Uncertain | 9.15 | 13.61 | -4.46 | 3.74 | 1.19 |
| 9. Fairer distribution of taxes possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 69.42 | 50.82 | 18.60 | 5.68 | 3.27** |
| b. No | 16.91 | 14.54 | 2.37 | 4.30 | .55 |
| c. Uncertain | 13.67 | 34.64 | -20.97 | 4.90 | 4.28** |

TABLE XXVIII (Continued)

| Question and Response | Percent Responding Male | Percent Responding Female | Difference $P_1 - P_2$ | Standard Error $P_1 - P_2$ | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10. More economies possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 70.62 | 61.31 | 9.31 | 5.57 | 1.67 |
| b. No | 19.00 | 13.47 | 5.53 | 4.34 | 1.27 |
| c. Uncertain | 10.38 | 27.23 | -14.85 | 4.33 | 3.43** |
| 11. Single board or separate boards of education for grade school and high school? | | | | | |
| a. Single board | 37.39 | 31.22 | 6.17 | 5.59 | 1.10 |
| b. Separate boards | 61.19 | 56.36 | 4.83 | 5.80 | .83 |
| c. Uncertain | 1.42 | 12.42 | -11.00 | 4.16 | 2.64** |
| 12. Advisory council for school boards? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 59.95 | 71.39 | -11.44 | 5.56 | 2.06* |
| b. Oppose | 32.78 | 13.59 | 19.19 | 4.85 | 3.95** |
| c. Uncertain | 7.26 | 15.02 | -7.76 | 3.69 | 2.10* |
| 13. Eight district recommendation best plan for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 51.17 | 45.68 | 5.49 | 5.89 | .93 |
| b. No | 23.71 | 17.81 | 5.90 | 4.77 | 1.24 |
| c. Uncertain | 25.12 | 36.51 | -11.39 | 5.41 | 2.11* |
| 14. A single county unit district for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 11.29 | 11.81 | -.52 | 3.79 | .14 |
| b. Oppose | 76.42 | 54.67 | 21.75 | 5.46 | 3.98** |
| c. Uncertain | 12.29 | 33.52 | -21.23 | 4.80 | 4.42** |
| 15.[b] Merging Champaign and Urbana school districts | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 70.00 | 35.77 | 34.28 | 5.54 | 6.19** |
| b. Oppose | 30.00 | 41.43 | -11.43 | 9.34 | 1.22 |
| c. Uncertain | 0.00 | 22.85 | -22.85 | 5.02 | 4.55** |

a Questions 2, 3, and 4 are omitted since they were not opinion items.
b Represents response of the Champaign-Urbana subsample.
* t significant at the .05 level.
** t significant at the .01 level.

TABLE XXIX

RESPONSES TO OPINION QUESTIONS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO ECONOMIC LEVEL OF RESPONDENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PERCENTAGES

| Question and Response | Percent Responding at Each Level | | Difference | Standard Error | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Lower | Upper | $p_1 - p_2$ | $p_1 - p_2$ | |
| 1. Number of school districts in Champaign County | | | | | |
| a. Fewer than present number | 53.64 | 72.07 | -18.43 | 6.05 | 3.05** |
| b. Same as present number | 12.86 | 8.77 | 4.09 | 3.75 | 1.09 |
| c. Uncertain | 33.50 | 19.16 | 14.34 | 5.26 | 2.73** |
| 5.[a] Attitude toward new proposed district in which respondent has been tentatively located | | | | | |
| a. Satisfied | 50.35 | 47.75 | 2.60 | 6.95 | .37 |
| b. Partly or wholly dissatisfied | 28.34 | 28.83 | -.49 | 5.60 | .09 |
| c. Uncertain | 21.31 | 23.42 | -2.11 | 5.18 | .41 |
| 6. Size of high school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 300 and over | 62.21 | 74.57 | -12.36 | 5.63 | 2.20* |
| b. Enrollment under 300 | 17.79 | 16.35 | 1.44 | 4.64 | .31 |
| c. Uncertain | 19.99 | 9.08 | 10.91 | 4.14 | 2.64** |
| 7. Size of grade school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 100 and over | 69.46 | 79.78 | -10.32 | 5.26 | 1.96* |
| b. Enrollment under 100 | 9.01 | 7.36 | 1.65 | 3.36 | .49 |
| c. Uncertain | 21.53 | 12.87 | 8.66 | 4.53 | 1.91 |
| 8. Better schools possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 66.79 | 78.36 | -11.57 | 5.39 | 2.15* |
| b. No | 18.15 | 15.42 | 2.73 | 4.59 | .59 |
| c. Uncertain | 15.06 | 6.21 | 8.85 | 3.60 | 2.46* |

TABLE XXIX (Continued)

| Question and Response | Percent Responding at Each Level | | Difference | Standard Error | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Lower | Upper | $p_1 - p_2$ | $p_1 - p_2$ | |
| 9. Fairer distribution of taxes possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 58.04 | 60.89 | -2.85 | 6.07 | .47 |
| b. No | 16.47 | 14.25 | 2.22 | 4.43 | .50 |
| c. Uncertain | 25.49 | 24.85 | .64 | 5.37 | .12 |
| 10. More economies possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 64.88 | 66.43 | -1.55 | 5.87 | .26 |
| b. No | 14.31 | 18.49 | -4.18 | 4.63 | .90 |
| c. Uncertain | 20.81 | 15.07 | 5.74 | 4.67 | 1.23 |
| 11. Single board or separate boards of education for grade school and high school? | | | | | |
| a. Single board | 28.94 | 41.88 | -12.94 | 5.93 | 2.18* |
| b. Separate boards | 62.58 | 52.16 | 10.42 | 6.11 | 1.71 |
| c. Uncertain | 8.48 | 5.95 | 2.53 | 3.14 | .81 |
| 12. Advisory council for school boards? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 64.30 | 69.34 | -5.04 | 5.80 | .87 |
| b. Oppose | 24.54 | 18.51 | 6.03 | 5.01 | 1.20 |
| c. Uncertain | 11.16 | 12.12 | - .99 | 3.99 | .25 |
| 13. Eight district recommendation best plan for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 45.27 | 52.64 | -7.37 | 5.66 | 1.30 |
| b. No | 22.97 | 16.51 | 6.46 | 4.84 | 1.33 |
| c. Uncertain | 31.76 | 30.85 | .91 | 5.74 | .16 |
| 14. A single county unit district for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 10.51 | 13.26 | -2.75 | 4.05 | .68 |
| b. Oppose | 67.78 | 59.14 | 8.64 | 5.98 | 1.44 |
| c. Uncertain | 21.70 | 27.61 | -5.91 | 4.35 | 1.36 |
| 15.[b] Merging Champaign and Urbana school districts | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 39.68 | 59.57 | -19.89 | 9.45 | 2.10* |
| b. Oppose | 44.44 | 27.66 | 16.78 | 9.04 | 1.85 |
| c. Uncertain | 15.87 | 12.76 | 3.11 | 6.70 | .46 |

a Questions 2, 3, and 4 are omitted since they were not opinion items.

b Represents response of the Champaign-Urbana subsample.

* t significant at the .05 level.

** t significant at the .01 level.

TABLE XXX

RESPONSES TO OPINION QUESTIONS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO SCHOOL PATRONAGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PERCENTAGES

| Question and Response | Percent Responding | | Difference | Standard Error | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Patrons | Non-Patrons | $p_1 - p_2$ | $p_1 - p_2$ | |
| 1. Number of school districts in Champaign County | | | | | |
| a. Fewer than present number | 72.14 | 56.85 | 15.29 | 6.00 | 2.55* |
| b. Same as present number | 7.09 | 12.73 | -5.64 | 3.65 | 1.55 |
| c. Uncertain | 20.77 | 30.42 | -9.65 | 5.48 | 1.76 |
| 5.[a] Attitude toward new proposed district in which respondent has been tentatively located | | | | | |
| a. Satisfied | 60.37 | 45.47 | 14.90 | 6.38 | 2.34* |
| b. Partly or wholly dissatisfied | 14.89 | 30.47 | -15.58 | 5.05 | 3.09** |
| c. Uncertain | 24.74 | 24.06 | .68 | 5.58 | .12 |
| 6. Size of high school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 300 and over | 72.28 | 65.19 | 7.09 | 6.49 | 1.09 |
| b. Enrollment under 300 | 19.83 | 16.32 | 3.51 | 5.06 | .69 |
| c. Uncertain | 7.89 | 18.50 | -10.61 | 4.01 | 2.65** |
| 7. Size of grade school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 100 and over | 81.42 | 70.70 | 10.72 | 5.31 | 2.02* |
| b. Enrollment under 100 | 7.19 | 8.77 | -1.58 | 3.45 | .46 |
| c. Uncertain | 11.38 | 20.53 | -9.15 | 4.48 | 2.04* |
| 8. Better schools possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 80.14 | 68.20 | 11.94 | 5.44 | 2.19* |
| b. No | 14.42 | 18.02 | -3.60 | 5.17 | .70 |
| c. Uncertain | 5.44 | 13.78 | -8.34 | 3.46 | 2.41* |
| 9. Fairer distribution of taxes possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 65.11 | 57.06 | 8.05 | 6.25 | 1.29 |
| b. No | 13.32 | 16.41 | -3.09 | 4.53 | .68 |
| c. Uncertain | 21.57 | 26.53 | -4.96 | 5.45 | .91 |

TABLE XXX (Continued)

| Question and Response | Percent Responding | | Difference | Standard Error | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Patrons | Non-Patrons | $p_1 - p_2$ | $p_1 - p_2$ | |
| 10. More economies possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 76.39 | 61.65 | 14.74 | 5.75 | 2.56* |
| b. No | 13.21 | 16.90 | -3.69 | 4.54 | .81 |
| c. Uncertain | 10.40 | 21.45 | -11.05 | 4.40 | 2.51* |
| 11. Single board or separate boards of education for grade school and high school? | | | | | |
| a. Single board | 35.19 | 33.56 | 1.63 | 6.17 | .26 |
| b. Separate boards | 60.17 | 57.94 | 2.23 | 6.37 | .35 |
| c. Uncertain | 4.64 | 8.50 | -3.86 | 3.23 | 1.20 |
| 12. Advisory council for school boards? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 68.17 | 65.60 | 2.57 | 6.08 | .42 |
| b. Oppose | 22.03 | 22.24 | -.21 | 5.41 | .04 |
| c. Uncertain | 9.79 | 12.16 | -2.37 | 3.97 | .60 |
| 13. Eight district recommendation best plan for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 58.13 | 44.07 | 14.06 | 6.41 | 2.19* |
| b. No | 18.01 | 21.32 | -3.31 | 5.08 | .65 |
| c. Uncertain | 23.85 | 34.62 | -10.77 | 5.72 | 1.88 |
| 14. A single county unit district for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 9.90 | 12.17 | -2.27 | 3.98 | .57 |
| b. Oppose | 72.00 | 61.75 | 10.25 | 5.97 | 1.72 |
| c. Uncertain | 18.09 | 26.08 | -7.99 | 5.21 | 1.53 |
| 15.[b] Merging Champaign and Urbana school districts | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 56.52 | 45.98 | 10.54 | 11.63 | .91 |
| b. Oppose | 26.09 | 40.23 | -14.14 | 10.56 | 1.34 |
| c. Uncertain | 17.39 | 13.79 | 3.60 | 8.73 | .41 |

a Questions 2, 3, and 4 are omitted since they were not opinion items.
b Represents response of the Champaign-Urbana subsample.
* t significant at the .05 level.
** t significant at the .01 level.

TABLE XXXI

RESPONSES TO OPINION QUESTIONS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO PROPERTY OWNERSHIP GROUP OF THE RESPONDENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PERCENTAGES

| Question and Response | Percent Responding | | Difference $p_1 - p_2$ | Standard Error $p_1 - p_2$ | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Property Owners | Non-Property Owners | | | |
| 1. Number of school districts in Champaign County | | | | | |
| a. Fewer than present number | 59.30 | 64.20 | -4.90 | 6.05 | .81 |
| b. Same as present number | 11.55 | 10.65 | .90 | 3.92 | .23 |
| c. Uncertain | 29.15 | 25.15 | 4.00 | 5.53 | .72 |
| 5.[a] Attitude toward new proposed district in which respondent has been tentatively located | | | | | |
| a. Satisfied | 45.38 | 58.13 | -12.75 | 6.21 | 2.05* |
| b. Partly or wholly dissatisfied | 30.40 | 17.61 | 12.79 | 5.18 | 2.47* |
| c. Uncertain | 24.33 | 24.27 | .06 | 5.38 | .01 |
| 6. Size of high school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 300 and over | 65.15 | 71.70 | -6.55 | 5.76 | 1.14 |
| b. Enrollment under 300 | 16.32 | 19.39 | -3.07 | 4.85 | .63 |
| c. Uncertain | 18.53 | 8.91 | 9.62 | 4.05 | 2.38* |
| 7. Size of grade school in which a modern program of education can be offered most economically | | | | | |
| a. Enrollment 100 and over | 70.21 | 80.73 | -10.51 | 5.53 | 1.90 |
| b. Enrollment under 100 | 7.46 | 10.37 | -2.91 | 3.66 | .80 |
| c. Uncertain | 22.33 | 8.90 | 13.43 | 4.19 | 3.21** |
| 8. Better schools possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 68.76 | 76.92 | -8.16 | 5.47 | 1.49 |
| b. No | 18.02 | 15.01 | 3.01 | 4.60 | .65 |
| c. Uncertain | 13.21 | 8.07 | 5.14 | 3.71 | 1.39 |
| 9. Fairer distribution of taxes possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 56.68 | 64.64 | -7.96 | 6.07 | 1.31 |
| b. No | 15.77 | 15.24 | .53 | 4.53 | .17 |
| c. Uncertain | 27.55 | 20.12 | 7.43 | 5.23 | 1.42 |

TABLE XXXI (Continued)

| Question and Response | Percent Responding: Property Owners | Percent Responding: Non-Property Owners | Difference $p_1 - p_2$ | Standard Error $p_1 - p_2$ | t* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10. More economies possible by combining school districts? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 63.16 | 70.63 | -7.47 | 5.83 | 1.28 |
| b. No | 15.98 | 15.85 | .13 | 5.57 | .02 |
| c. Uncertain | 20.86 | 13.51 | 7.35 | 4.57 | 1.61 |
| 11. Single board or separate boards of education for grade school and high school? | | | | | |
| a. Single board | 34.14 | 33.65 | .49 | 5.93 | .08 |
| b. Separate boards | 56.21 | 63.63 | -7.42 | 6.10 | 1.22 |
| c. Uncertain | 9.65 | 2.72 | 6.93 | 2.71 | 2.56* |
| 12. Advisory council for school boards? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 64.57 | 70.01 | -5.44 | 5.84 | .93 |
| b. Oppose | 21.34 | 24.06 | -2.72 | 5.29 | .51 |
| c. Uncertain | 14.08 | 5.93 | 8.15 | 3.49 | 2.34* |
| 13. Eight district recommendation best plan for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 49.14 | 45.81 | 3.33 | 6.26 | .53 |
| b. No | 21.27 | 18.65 | 2.62 | 4.97 | .53 |
| c. Uncertain | 29.54 | 35.54 | -6.00 | 5.91 | 1.02 |
| 14. A single county unit district for this county? | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 10.76 | 13.41 | -2.65 | 4.15 | .64 |
| b. Oppose | 62.11 | 69.51 | -7.40 | 5.88 | 1.26 |
| c. Uncertain | 27.13 | 17.08 | 10.05 | 5.02 | 2.00* |
| 15.[b] Merging Champaign and Urbana school districts | | | | | |
| a. Favor | 44.30 | 58.06 | -13.76 | 10.48 | 1.31 |
| b. Oppose | 39.24 | 32.26 | 6.98 | 10.03 | .70 |
| c. Uncertain | 16.46 | 9.68 | 6.78 | 6.75 | 1.00 |

a Questions 2, 3, and 4 are omitted since they were not opinion items.
b Represents response of the Champaign-Urbana subsample.
* t significant at the .05 level.
** t significant at the .01 level.

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